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Nato admits bombing convoy

Confusion over 'tragic accident' in which 72 died

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE EDITOR, AND CHARLES BREMMER IN BRUSSELS

NATO's admission yesterday that an American F16 pilot mistakenly bombed a convoy of fleeing Albanian refugees failed to resolve the confusing picture over the raid. Belgrade claims that at least 72 people were killed.

Nato released a transcript of the pilot's account of the bombing in which he said he fired at "three uniformly-shaped dark green vehicles" which he believed contained Yugoslav forces involved in setting fire to villages near Dakovica in southwest Kosovo.

Yesterday, Western journalists were taken by the Yugoslav authorities to see the wreckage of tractors and other vehicles on the Prizren to Dakovica road, which is used daily by civilian and military traffic.

Shrapnel with American military markings was seen scattered over the road.

With General Hugh Shelton, the Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, warning Congress yesterday that allied airstrikes might have to continue until midsummer, the tragic error was being viewed as a major blow to the campaign.

Nato confirmed after many hours of confusing — sometimes contradictory — statements that a truck hit by the F16 had been carrying civilians. But officials were unable to give any estimate of casualties.

The precise location of the attack was also unclear. One Nato report indicated that the vehicles were on a dirt track, and yet pictures taken of the wrecked vehicles showed they were on a proper road.

Nato remained convinced that the convoy was being escorted by military vehicles.

Brigadier-General



Two ethnic Albanian sisters, ten-year-old Sabrmeta Nuraj, right, and Besijana, 11 months, in hospital in Dakovica. Their mother was killed in the Nato attack on the village of Meja

Giuseppe Marani, a Nato military spokesman, said another Nato aircraft had later attacked a second convoy comprising three trucks, but that they were carrying only Serb troops.

Adding further to the confusion, refugees arriving in Albania said that a column of vehicles they were travelling in was attacked by a Yugoslav MiG fighter and that at least six people were killed.

In a statement acknowledging responsibility for the attack on the refugee convoy, Jamie Shea, the Nato spokesman, expressed "deep regret" for the deaths. "Our Operation Allied Force was launched to save civilian lives, not expend them," he said.

However, he added: "Despite these accidents, we have to continue. One tragic accident cannot, and will not, undermine our commitment to saving lives or weaken our resolve."

"No conflict in history has ever been accident-free. We can reduce the risk of accidents but we cannot eliminate them altogether."

In Washington, William Cohen, the US Defence Secretary, said Nato would continue to intensify the bombing campaign. George Robertson, Britain's Defence Secretary, flew to Washington last night to hold talks with Mr Cohen about the way the campaign is progressing.

Tony Blair said the allies

should not flinch from blaming President Milosevic for the deaths. He said: "We are not going to take any lessons from Milosevic about care for refugees when these refugees are actually in a convoy because they are fleeing from the butchery, the savagery, the rape, the torture, the mutilation, of ordinary innocent people."

The alliance said it had video footage from the bungled strike, but did not show it yesterday — as it did earlier this week after the air attack on a bridge near Leskovac which hit passenger train. Instead, it offered a post-mission recording by the unnamed US pilot who led a flight of two aircraft.

Although Nato appeared only to have confirmed that a single truck had been hit, Belgrade still insisted that at least 72 people had been killed. The Yugoslav authorities also claimed that the final death toll from the attack on the passenger train on Monday had risen to 55. Originally, the figure was ten, with 16 injured.

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, while regretting the civilian deaths, said he had a number of questions he would like to ask Mr Milosevic.

He asked: "Why was this a mixed convoy of civilians and Serbian police? What precisely were the special police doing with these civilians? Were they there as human shields?" Mr Cook also said he hoped

that Western journalists taken to the scene would demand to visit all the sites in Kosovo where Yugoslav forces had committed atrocities against Albanians.

He said: "In this new spirit of openness, will Mr Milosevic allow those journalists to visit the sites of mass graves... and the villages that have been shelled and torched and cleared?"

Underlining the intention to maintain round-the-clock bombing, there were further attacks reported yesterday on an army barracks at Rakovica and two television transmitters. There were also reports of 11 explosions in Pristina, the Kosovo capital.

RAF Harriers also took ad-

vantage of clear skies over Kosovo to step up their cluster bomb attacks on mobile targets.

Meanwhile, the Government and refugee organisations are drawing up plans for the arrival of several thousand refugees at Stansted airport.

INSIDE

My daughter talks into her toy phone: 'Yes, they threw bombs at their houses. Terrible, isn't it?' Of course she doesn't know what a bomb is. My stomach is weak with shock.

Sandra Parsons, married to a Serb doctor, Page 21

The negotiations with the Serbs should be conducted by Nato and Russia jointly. Moscow has more influence with Belgrade than anyone else and the Russian public must be shown that the West sees Russia as having an essential role to play.

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John Simpson accused of Serb bias

By PHILIP WEBSTER

JOHN SIMPSON, the BBC's veteran foreign correspondent, has run into fierce criticism from the Government over his coverage from Belgrade.

Mr Simpson, the World Affairs Editor, who has reported most of the big international conflicts of the past decade, has been accused by government sources of falling short of the standards expected of a leading journalist.

In an astonishing attack senior officials accused him of presenting at face value claims by the Serbs about damage done by Nato attacks, being grossly simplistic in suggesting that the Nato assault has united the Serb population and Milosevic's forces, and of swallowing Serb propaganda about the impact of Nato's air raids. In private, officials are using strong lan-

guage. Although the BBC precedes all Mr Simpson's dispatches with a "health warning" explaining that they are being monitored by the Serbs, officials in Downing Street say that he fails to display scepticism.

The Government's critics are certain to say that in criticising such a respected correspondent it is overreacting. But the criticisms of Mr Simpson are symptomatic of a wider dissatisfaction in the Government over the BBC's coverage of conflicts in which Nato is involved.

Alastair Campbell, Tony Blair's Press Secretary, George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, and Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, all complained formally about the BBC's coverage during the Iraq bombing.

"It did not change anything then and so far we have not officially complained this time," an informed govern-

ment source said yesterday. "But it may well come to that."

Most of the criticism has been levelled by officials off-the-record. There was fury over a series of interviews Mr Simpson did with Serb civilians this week in which they declared that the Nato bombing had strengthened their support for Milosevic. They say that he should have pointed out that with the Serbs monitoring the media they could have hardly said anything different.

Yesterday there was anger over an assertion by Mr Simpson that the Serbs must have been sure of their ground on the responsibility for the Kosovo bombing accident because they were taking journalists to the site. One said: "Do us a favour John. There is a history of journalists being taken to see damage that has been self-inflicted."

The BBC strongly defended Mr

Simpson. A spokesman said that his reports of what was happening in Belgrade had been confirmed by independent journalists based there. "He can move without security police in Belgrade but is at great personal risk on the streets. His television film packages are monitored but his voice reports on radio and TV are not and that is made clear."

Richard Ayre, deputy chief executive of BBC News, said: "I pay tribute to John Simpson's courage and the integrity of his reporting. It is important that audiences are given a true account of the public mood in Belgrade, not simply an account of what Nato governments might prefer to hear."

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Ex-MP cleared
The election fraud conviction against Fiona Jones, ex-MP for Newark, was quashed. Page 2

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Almost the cough that carried him off

By MARK HENDERSON

AN INNOCENT Welshman narrowly escaped a prison sentence after a judge misheard the jury's verdict because of a courtroom cough.

As the foreman of the jury at Cardiff Crown Court rose to deliver a "not guilty" verdict on Alan Rashid, 32, who was charged with making a threat to kill, a fellow juror cleared his throat.

Judge Michael Gibbon clearly heard "guilty" but the "not" was obscured and he

jailed Mr Rashid for two years before thanking the jury for their efforts during the two-day trial and releasing them.

Mr Rashid was taken to the cells to begin his sentence and would have been none the wiser had not a confused juror asked a court usher why the defendant had been jailed after being found not guilty.

In a case believed to be the first of its kind in Britain, a bemused Mr Rashid was then led back to the dock and told by Judge Gibbon that he was

free to go. He turned to his mother at the back of the court and punched the air.

Until the juror spoke up, his colleagues had thought Mr Rashid must have been being sentenced for another charge that he had admitted. Nobody thought about the cough until Crown Prosecution Lawyers reviewed the court tape, on which it was clearly audible a split second ahead of a loud "guilty" from the foreman.

Nicholas Williamson, court manager at Cardiff Crown Court, said Mr Rashid had

been "very relieved" by the eventual outcome. "It was a very bizarre situation," he said. "The foreman of the jury indicated a guilty verdict and the court proceeded to sentence the defendant."

A spokesman for the College of Law in Guildford later confirmed that Mr Rashid's escape was unique. "It is hard to be absolutely sure given the long history of English law but this is certainly the first case of this kind that my colleagues or I can think of," he said.



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Once upon a time, there were seven tax relief measures

"Are you sitting comfortably? Now, children, I want you to listen to some lovely stories which Aunt Patricia, the Economic Secretary to the Treasury, has been reading to MPs at Treasury Questions."

"Do sit still and listen carefully, because Trish has some very important things to tell you. They're a tiny bit complicated in places, but clever boys and girls, and I know you all are — do stop making faces, Master Maude — will understand all the very nice things Trish will explain about Uncle Gordon's wise and sensible economic policies."

"Oh — sorry, children —

will you wait a moment while I just tell the grown-ups what we're doing?"

What we're doing, grown-ups, is introducing the Economic Secretary, Patricia Hewitt, at the Dispatch Box yesterday morning. Ms Hewitt, in whom I am having increasing difficulty in believing, wore an eau-de-Nile silk blouse with mega-shoulders, and radiated glitter-quality. You could imagine her stepping from a stretched white Cadillac.

And she addressed MPs in the most extraordinary manner. It took this sketchwriter back to infancy, watching a



1950s children's television programme called *Rag, Tag and Bobtail*, and hearing *Listen with Mother* on the BBC.

To get into the Hewitt groove, we must preface her answers with an imaginary fairytale opening, then interject the same tone into the real text. So stop fidgeting. Let's follow Aunt's answer to Richard Burden (Lab, Birmingham Northfield). But first — "This is the story of Gold-

locks and the Three Bears. One morning, a pretty little girl called Goldilocks leaped her basket and filled it with lovely food for her grandmother, who lived in the forest and was far from well ...

"And this year's Budget contains the most far-reaching package of environmental tax reforms ever seen in our country!"

"There was a jar of delicious strawberry jam, a big

lusty cheese, and a crusty loaf of really yummy bread, all covered over with a pretty gingham tea-towel ...

They include a fifty five pound reduction in Vehicle Excise Duty for smaller cars! Fundamental reform of company car taxation! Changes in fuel duty to encourage cleaner fuels! And seven new tax relief measures!"

Trish's fairytales were read so slowly, with such patronising emphasis, and with so many vastly significant pauses to help the children appreciate the wonderfulness of it all, that the temptation to make rude noises, pick our

noses or throw our rattles on the floor was barely resistible.

Owen Paterson (Shropshire N) hardly did. Throwing a tiny tantrum from the Tory benches, he raged against "dirty foreign lorries" and was met by howls from all the children on the other side. That was a very naughty thing to say, Owen. You may say "dirty Serb lorries", but foreign lorries means European lorries, and Europeans are nice people — don't you remember Uncle Tony telling us that? Mr Paterson also accused Ms Hewitt of "trumpeting" the Government's

claims. Wrong verb, surely? Aunt Patricia doesn't trumpet, she flutes. It is strangely menacing — Pinteresque. Bad boys and girls will have their privileges withdrawn, and maybe even their fingers chopped off.

But Joshua Dean, aged 7, is a good boy. He had written to Paul Goggins (Lab, Wythenshawe & Sale E) asking the Government to cancel third world debts. Mr Goggins read the letter, with approval to the Chancellor. Uncle Gordon liked it, too. Apparently thousands of children agree. The Front Bench all nodded. Heaven help us.

NEWS IN BRIEF

£20,000 for inmates' salmonella poisoning

Thirteen inmates at Dartmoor prison have won a total of £20,000 in compensation after they were affected by an outbreak of salmonella poisoning. The Prison Service gave the inmates sums ranging from £1,350 to £1,750 after they threatened legal action. The prisoners became ill after raw sewage leaked on to the jail's farm, passed through inmates working with cattle and spread to other prisoners. Those affected were sick for between one and three weeks.

Caring jail 'too soft', page 3

Obstetrician who fled is struck off

An obstetrician who fled Britain after the death of a baby boy he delivered by forceps was yesterday struck off the medical register for serious professional misconduct. Helmi Nour, a former locum registrar at Queen Charlotte's Hospital, London, who practises in Saudi Arabia, was found by the General Medical Council to have used undue force in delivering Amos Tait, who died an hour after he was born in August 1997.

Youth held over Briton's killing

A 14-year-old has been arrested for the murder in Cape Town of the British photographer John Rubythorn, who was stabbed to death in an apparent burglary attempt this week. South African police said. A blood-stained knife and bloodied clothing were recovered during the arrest. Mr Rubythorn, 58, who recently became a father, was a well-known figure in Cape Town. He had been working as a television producer.

Man, 90, 'beaten to death by gang'

A 90-year-old war veteran died after being beaten, tied to a chair and gagged in his home by a gang of robbers. Newcastle upon Tyne Crown Court was told. Thomas Hall was left for the night after the robbers switched off his heating and electricity on one of the coldest nights of 1997. Four men deny murder, manslaughter, conspiracy to rob and robbery; three deny conspiracy to rob and two others deny lesser offences.

Comedian gets stamp of approval

Norman Wisdom was presented with a specially mounted Penny Black stamp to mark his 50-year career in showbusiness. The 54-year-old comedian was making an appearance at Stamp '99, a four-day international exhibition being staged at Wembley Conference Centre in London. Asked if he had collected stamps as a boy, he said: "I just stick them on the letters and send them. It's a very nice, warm gesture."

Wolf shot after killing sheep

A wolf that escaped from Port Lympne Zoo, owned by the millionaire John Aspinall, killed three rams before being shot. The Canadian timber wolf leapt over the top of its enclosure and killed the animals more than two miles away. Villagers at Aldington, Kent, also reported seeing "a large black dog" chasing horses before the sheep died. Zoo officials said the wolf was not a threat to humans but pledged a security review.

Fraud appeal win reprieves Labour

Boothroyd is studying judgment that may restore Newark MP, report Roland Watson and Mark Inglefield

LABOUR appeared to have escaped the threat of a potentially embarrassing by-election yesterday when the Court of Appeal quashed the conviction for election fraud of Fiona Jones, the ex-MP for Newark.

Her counsel argued that the statutory definition of election spending was too wide to be fairly enforced. Betty Boothroyd, the Speaker, is to spend the weekend studying the judgment. She will rule on Monday whether the result gives Mrs Jones an automatic right to return to the Commons.

While careful not to take her decision for granted, the Labour hierarchy was confident that natural justice would earn Mrs Jones a parliamentary reprieve less than a month after a jury at Nottingham Crown Court made her the first MP for 75 years to be convicted of falsely declaring elec-

tion expenses. A Labour spokesman said: "We are hopeful she will be reinstated as the MP for Newark early next week and that therefore a by-election need not take place."

Mrs Jones herself was even more sure that she would be able to return without defending her 3,000-majority. Immediately after yesterday's result, she insisted she would be returning. "I have had a very raw deal," she said.

Such a decision would save Labour from a crisis that was beginning to develop around its strategy for a by-election. With less than three weeks to go to their preferred date, the party was without a candidate. Brian Moore, the former England rugby player, had refused heavy overtures, as revealed in *The Times* yesterday. Although Labour's national executive by-election panel had earmarked Nicholas Dakin, a



Boothroyd: will give her ruling on Monday

teacher and leader of North Lincolnshire council, as a possible contender, senior officials were split on whether to widen the search.

The result also prompted calls for a review of election law governing candidates' expenses, an area that is routinely flouted by all parties. Officials from all parties point out that much of the current guidance given to candidates is out of date, covering the cost of sending telegrams but not the cost of using mobile tele-

phones. Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, is expected to publish guidance for the proposed Electoral Commission before the summer which would cover much of the ground. Ministers may also look at redrafting Schedule 3 of the Representation of the People Act.

The Lord Chief Justice, Lord Bingham of Cornhill, sitting with Mr Justice Moses and Mr Justice Penny-Davey, ruled in Mrs Jones' favour after her counsel argued that definitions in the 1983 Act were too wide to be fairly enforced. The judges also indicated they would allow the appeal of her election agent, Des Wicher, 73.

The case against her was sparked partly by feuding within the local Labour Party, which remains suspended. The Tories accepted that Mrs Jones should be reinstated if the Speaker ruled in her favour. The Liberal Democrats said that the case revealed the extent to which electoral law needed to be reformed. "Electoral law has been clouded with uncertainty and anomalies for far too long," said Nick Harvey, campaigns co-ordinator.



Fiona Jones after her court victory yesterday: the law may now be reformed

Mother of three missing in snow

By HELEN RUMBELOW

A MOTHER of three has been lost in snowstorms on the west coast of Wales for more than 24 hours, a victim of the treacherously cold weather hitting the west coast of Britain.

Freezing winds from the Arctic are being dragged down over Cumbria, Lancashire, Wales and the South-west by a depression over the North Sea. As fresh snow fell last night police stepped up a search for the 47-year-old woman, from the Lamphey area of Tenby, who did not return from a walk with her dog on Wednesday evening. She had set out along the coastal path above the Freshwater East Beach near Tenby as snow began to fall at 7pm.

The country's heaviest snow fell in Wales in the early hours of yesterday, with up to six inches in the Valleys around Merthyr and Aberdare. The M4 was blocked by snowfalls and ice overnight, forcing the closure of the motorway near Cardiff during the morning rush hour.

Two climbers were rescued from Ben Nevis yesterday, after being caught in snowstorms on Wednesday night. One of them called for help by ringing his girlfriend on his mobile phone, and they were winched to safety by helicopter.

Forecast, page 26

Ulster parties called to talks at Downing St

By MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

TONY BLAIR and Bertie Ahern last night summoned Northern Ireland's three main political parties to Downing Street next Monday in yet another attempt to prevent the Good Friday peace accord from unravelling.

They all but admitted that their last attempt, the Hillsborough Declaration, had failed. The two Prime Ministers will hold a fresh round of meetings with the Ulster Unionists, Sinn Féin and the nationalist Social Democratic and Labour Party in a new effort to end the deadlock over IRA disarmament that is blocking the formation of the Province's executive. Shortly before Easter the two men produced the Hillsborough Declaration, after 40 hours of talks over four days, but yesterday, after meeting Mr Blair at Downing Street, the Taoiseach all but admitted that that plan had failed. "It's clear to us the Hillsborough Declaration has not got the widespread support we would like," he said.

The leaders gave no hint last night that they had any new ideas for ending the impasse. Officials said the two would use Monday's meetings to "find out where the parties are and if there's room for manoeuvre". After three days of fruitless talks at Stormont this week it is evident that the parties themselves have nothing new to offer.

Mr Ahern insisted that he and Mr Blair were "absolutely determined and will do everything humanly possible and within our power" to implement last year's accord.

Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, admitted that "we are in difficult times", but insisted: "What we must never forget is that the parties are still talking. That's what's important." She pledged to keep the talks going as long as necessary, but acknowledged that the impending Euro-elections and marching season would diminish the chance of a compromise.

The Declaration pleased Unionists by acknowledging that Sinn Féin could not sit on an executive without the IRA beginning to disarm, but sought to remove all connotations of surrender from the act of decommissioning.

Sinn Féin rejected the declaration, calling it a rewriting of the accord. The loyalist Progressive Unionist Party, the centrist Alliance party and the Women's Coalition were also sharply critical of it. The Ulster Unionists reserved judgment. □ Loyalists yesterday pushed pipebombs through the letter boxes of two Roman Catholic families in Randalstown, Co Antrim; neither device exploded.

£3m trial on impact of GM crops

By NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

THE health of the earthworm, as well as insects and plants, is to play a key role in government decisions on the future of genetically modified crops.

Michael Meacher, the Environment Minister, told the House of Commons yesterday that £3.3 million is to be spent over the next four years on "farm scale" trials to compare the impacts of genetically modified oil seed rape and maize on the wider environment.

The studies, to be carried out by a number of research centres led by the Natural Environment Research Council's Institute of Terrestrial Ecology, are to survey insect

and plant life in and around the tests fields.

Mr Meacher said the studies would also focus on the health of the earth below ground level. "For example, earthworm population monitoring provides a good indicator of the structure and fertility of the soil," he told MPs. "Above ground environmental impact will be studied, again by carrying out surveys of plant and populations and invertebrates."

The first trials, covering the impact of herbicide-tolerant crops, are taking place this year. GM oilseed rape has been planted in Wiltshire.

It is hoped to build up to around 20 test sites across the country. They will reflect the differing conditions in Britain in which such crops are

likely to be grown. Dr Brian Johanson of English Nature, the Government's wildlife advisers, and a member of a Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions steering committee on genetically modified crops, said yesterday that they would be vigorously monitoring the crop trials.

The Government is hoping to agree a voluntary moratorium on commercial plantings of GM crops until the farm scale trials have been completed and analysed. So far the industry has refused.

CORRECTIONS

A report (Are supermarkets cheating you?, April 9) wrongly quoted John Bridgeman, director-general of the Office of Fair Trading, as saying their inquiry into the £600million supermarket business had been inconclusive. In fact, what Mr Bridgeman said was that the level of profitability disclosed required further investigation. The BBC has not lost three mil-

lion listeners because of changes to parliamentary coverage (report, March 30). When given the choice of listening to Today on FM or Yesterday in Parliament on long wave, 82 per cent stay with Today. Peter Duffy QC (obituary, April 12) wrote a column for the Solicitors Journal, and not, as reported, for the Law Society Gazette.

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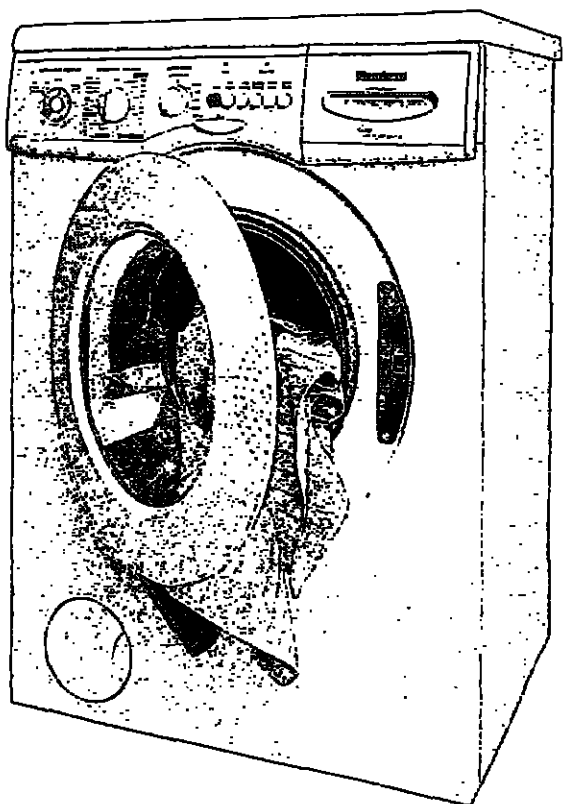
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مكتبة الأمل

Royals spare the horses and hire bus

By Alan Hamilton

ROYALTY once arrived by carriage procession. Yesterday a rented bus carried a motley collection of the European reigning and deposed to a family occasion to which they all claimed some relationship, distant though it may have been.

The event was the christening of Prince Konstantine Alexios, grandson of King Constantine, one-time monarch of Greece, at the Greek cathedral of St Sophia in Bayswater, West London. Among the eight godparents in attendance, the undoubtedly star attraction was Prince William, performing his first major solo engagement. His left arm was heavily strapped in a sling after an operation on his index finger to repair a rugby injury. Monarchy is not yet an entirely redundant profession. Present at the hour-long service were the young heirs to the thrones of Denmark, Spain and Sweden, along with such other active royalty as Queen Sophia of Spain and Princess Caroline of Monaco.

But the redundant were also represented, not least by Prince Dimitri of Yugoslavia, a 40-year-old New York jeweller expert whose family have recently made a public denunciation of Presi-

dent Milosevic. After the service the guests attended a party at Claridge's, an entirely appropriate venue as part of the hotel was briefly declared Yugoslav territory in 1944 when the present claimant to the Belgrade throne, Crown Prince Alexander, was born there.

Prince William looked more at ease than usual as family and friends stood on the steps of the cathedral for photographs. The baby, born in New York and wrapped yesterday in a long white christening robe, was held first by his mother and father, Crown Prince and Princess Pavlos of Greece, and then by his grandfather, Prince William stood next to the parents, but with one arm hors de combat he was unable to take his turn at holding the infant.

Prince Konstantine will be brought up in New York. His mother, Marie-Chantal, is the daughter of Robert Miller, the American duty-free retail billionaire.

Prince William now has new responsibilities as a godfather, but they should not be too onerous. King Constantine, in a television interview last night, said: "It does not require too much from him — just a phone call once a year."



Prince Konstantin sleeps through the attentions of his mother, left, grandfather and British godfather, Prince William in Bayswater yesterday

Prince of Poms tells it straight

THE Prince of Wales told school pupils yesterday how he was referred to as a "Pommy bastard" when he spent time in Australia as a 16-year-old.

During a visit to Manchester Grammar School, the Prince, in jocular mood, also spoke about a walking holiday in Australia.

"On one occasion I managed to do 60 miles in one weekend and I climbed four peaks, one of which is called — and this always amuses the teenagers — Mount Buggery."

The Prince was told about how the 484-year-old public school was building links with a nearby inner-city comprehensive. Sixth-formers act as "buddies" to pupils at Ducie High School and teachers are involved in a mentoring scheme.

The Prince said his sons advised him to keep school talks short and funny. He then recalled how he had once heard a fellow speaker give a warning about bad language: "There was a gust of wind and I heard myself say into the microphone: 'Damn, my bloody notes have flown away.'"

Photograph, page 26

GP 'murdered elderly patient with injection'

By Tim Jones

A "DEDICATED, caring and well-liked doctor" went on trial for murder yesterday, accused of killing an elderly, bed-ridden patient by deliberately administering a fatal dose of diamorphine.

The court was told that David Moor, 52, committed the murder in July 1997 when he ended the life of George Liddell, 85, who had undergone an operation for bowel cancer.

The jury was told that the prosecution followed a police investigation arising from media interviews in which Dr Moor had said that he had administered many lethal injections over a 30-year period to relieve dying patients of their pain and distress.

Dr Moor, now retired, had been a single-handed GP in the village of Fenham, in Northumberland.

James Goss, QC, for the prosecution, told the jury at Newcastle Crown Court that the case followed an article written by a Michael Irwin, a doctor, in *The Sunday Times*, in which he said he had helped numerous patients to die.

In a follow-up interview with the Press Association, Dr Moor said that he had administered two doses of diamorphine — a pharmaceutical heroin used as a strong painkiller — to two of his patients in recent weeks and, over 30 years, had given many lethal injections.



David Moor: seen by nurses injecting patient

Dr Moor said in the interview that he "aggressively supported" what Dr Irwin was doing and that those against euthanasia should witness the distress of dying patients and their relatives before "having the temerity to come to me and argue the case against euthanasia".

In another interview, Mr Goss said, Dr Moor repeated that he had helped a lot of people to die over the years and said that, to do it, he would "go in with a fairly high dose of diamorphine".

Although Dr Moor said in the interview that he accepted he was probably breaking the law, or was on the fringe of breaking it, he did not anticipate being prosecuted and claimed he would not be struck off the medical register.

Later, after Mr Liddell's death, Dr Moor told Rachel Chapman, head of communications for the NHS executive for the area, that he had two patients in the past week who were ready to go and that their relatives were ready for them to go. He didn't have a problem with it and "we can give them a more comfortable exit".

A post-mortem examination of Mr Liddell's body showed that death was due to an overdose of morphine.

Mr Goss added: "The prosecution case is simple: Dr Moor deliberately ended the life of George Liddell by administering a fatal dose of diamorphine. His primary intention was to end life."

He added: "This is not a trial about the merits or demerits of euthanasia, or mercy killing. It is a straightforward alleged case of a doctor deliberately ending the life of a patient in his care."

He said Dr Moor, who visited Mr Liddell only twice, increased his medication to 30 milligrams of diamorphine to be taken every six hours for 24 hours.

The next day, he said, Dr Moor visited the house and was seen by nurses attempting to inject Mr Liddell, who was then unconscious, in the neck, the hand and, finally, in the left thigh.

Mr Goss said an inability to account for 300mg of diamorphine appeared to be consistent with the level of morphine taken from Mr Liddell's body. The case continues.

Dying student 'begged his killers for help'

By Richard Duce

A TERRIFIED college student begged to know why he was being stabbed to death by his two closest friends, a teenager who has admitted the murder told a hushed courtroom yesterday.

In a matter-of-fact manner, Graham Wallis relived the final moments of Russell Crookes, 17, but could offer no real reason for why he decided to murder his friend. Wallis, 18, is the chief prosecution witness against Neil Sayers, 19, who denies that he was also involved in the murder. The trio was almost inseparable and had formed a survivalist group called The Brotherhood while studying horticulture at Hadlow College in Kent.

In May last year all three had set off for woods in the college grounds and built a fire. Russell's friends had decided to kill him, apparently because he had become a bully, Maidstone Crown Court was told. Wallis, from Croydon, South London, said that Mr Sayers had attacked Russell in a field near the woods.

"Neil stopped stabbing Russell and moved away a bit and Russell asked him why he'd done it. Neil said nothing and then went back and stabbed Russell again," he said. "After Neil stopped stabbing him again he again asked 'Why?' before turning to me and asking me to help him. I moved towards Russell and because he had started making a kind of roar or noise I put my hand over his mouth and then I tried to stab Russell in the neck and round the head."

Wallis said that he and Mr Sayers had burned their friend's body, and later buried it in a shallow grave. The prosecution allege that Russell was dismembered before burial but Wallis told the court that one arm and one leg had come away during the fire.

Mr Sayers, from Gillingham, denies murder. The trial continues.



Supporters of Dr Moor outside the court yesterday

Old lags find caring jail too soft

PRISONERS at Britain's first privately-run prison have asked to be moved to state-run institutions because the staff are too friendly. The shock of being addressed as "Mr" or by their first names, or finding spotless reception areas, has proved too much for some inmates at the Volds on Humberside. Some have requested that they be returned to jails characterised by the more familiar "mutual antipathy" between staff and prisoners.

Sir David Ramsbotham, Chief Inspector of Prisons, says in his inspection report today that for others, being treated with respect and challenged about their behaviour has caused them to seek solace in their cells. "Many prisoners with long experience of time served in many public sector prisons over many years de-

Prisoners hanker for 'mutual antipathy', reports Richard Ford

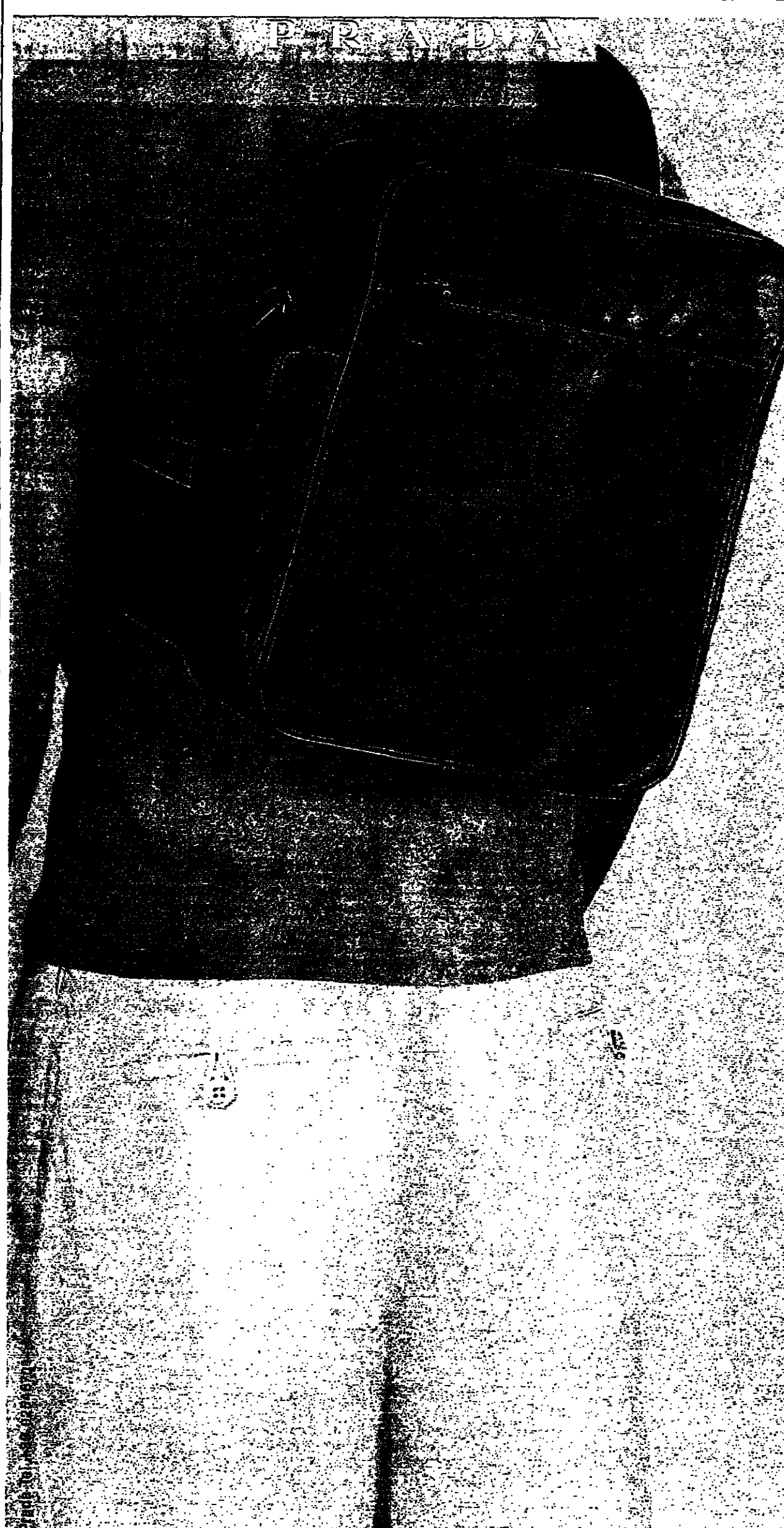
scribed to me and my team the cultural shock that they had experienced of stepping into a spotlessly clean reception area where they were treated as human beings," Sir David says. He adds that for a very few the cultural change of being treated with respect and as a fellow human being was a step too far.

His report says many inmates with long histories of imprisonment were happier to remain on the "narrow tramlines" of traditional institutional life

rather than be made to work and attend education classes. "They tend to retreat behind their doors, and a few ask to be 'shipped out'."

Sir David praises the jail, run by Group 4, for creating a humane, safe and caring community. Inmates were on first-name terms with staff, who addressed them as Mr, shared meals with them and treated them as individual human beings. The reception process was "no more threatening than checking in at the airport" and bullying, drug use and graffiti were not common.

Group 4, which was unable to say how many inmates had asked for a transfer, said it was delighted with the inspector's verdict that privately run prisons had "shown their worth".



TDS15240

US public warned of long campaign

Mr McCain, a strong advocate of ground forces, insisted that there was a considerable difference between fighting a war to win and fighting one not to lose.



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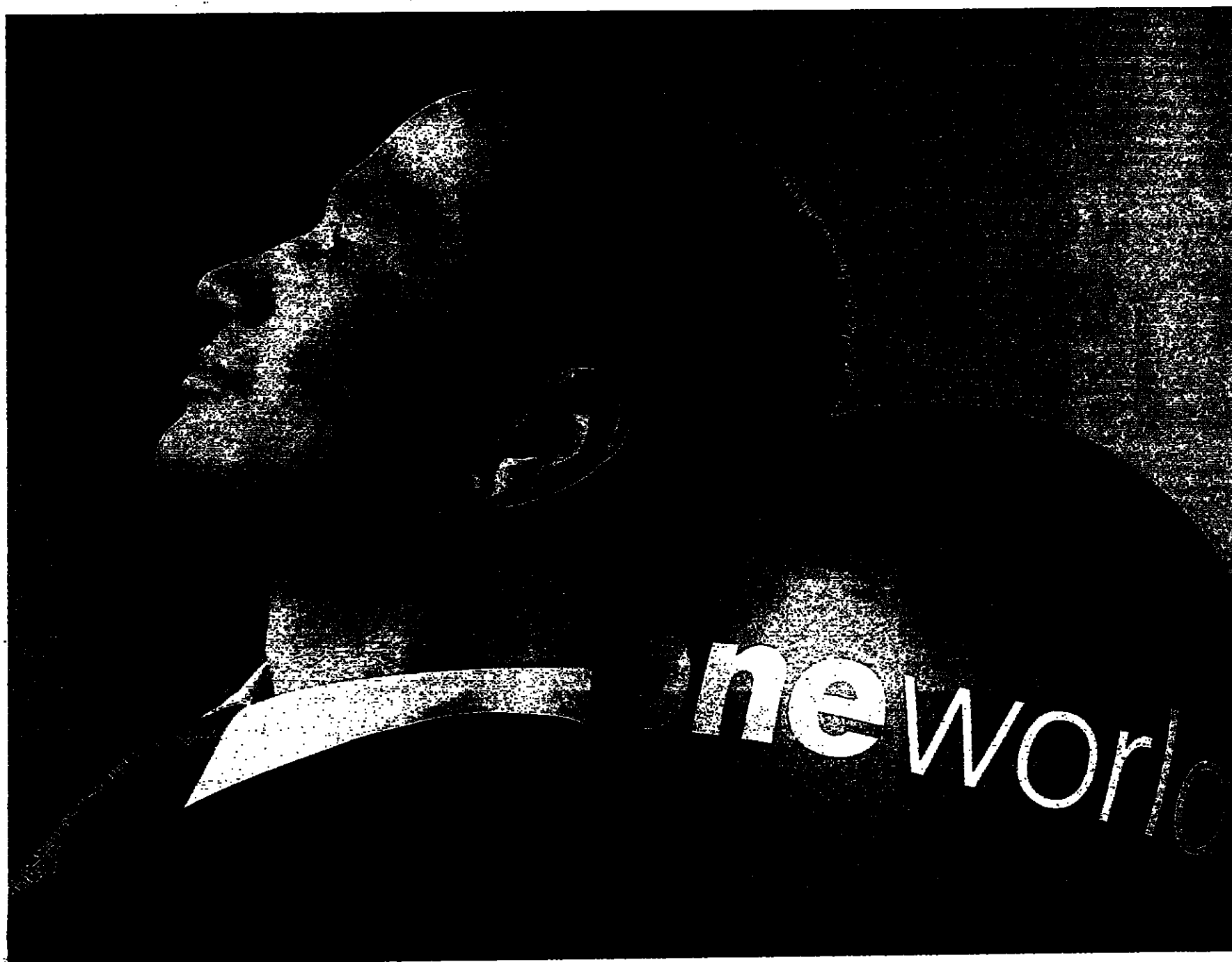
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But many, too, have no affection for President Milosevic, blaming him for the violent break-up of the Yugoslav Federation.

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BALKANS WAR: WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

How do we get out of this mess?

Three weeks into the offensive, opinion is divided on how to end the conflict

'We should declare victory and get out as soon as we can'



DECLARE VICTORY

David Hackworth

Author, retired army colonel and America's most decorated ex-serviceman

WE should do what we didn't do in South Vietnam, declare victory and get out as soon as we can.

And while we are getting out we should also get out of NATO because the Europeans are all big boys now. They've been feeding on the American test since the Second World

War and it's about time they took care of themselves.

The purpose of NATO was to defend Europe from the Soviet Union, which has expired, leaving NATO with no purpose whatsoever.

It seems to me Clinton and Blair have caused themselves a neat little war that has

brought the Cold War back. Blair and Europe should handle it by themselves.

I think the strategic objective in Kosovo should be to cut it in half and let Milosevic take the northern half with all the sacred lands — and the very rich mineral deposits — and allow the southern half to become a separate republic or fold it into Albania.

I think you will see Milosevic's columns slowly pull back to be positioned to that end.

I think it will also be the beginning of the end for Milosevic. Many Serbs hold him in the same disregard that millions of Americans feel for Clinton.

Clear purpose vital to resolve the conflict

I THINK it is safe to assume that no one, including me, anticipated the speed with which Serbia would defeat our objectives in Kosovo, and the scope of that defeat.

Yes, the war is only three weeks old, and yes, NATO can and probably will prevail in this conflict with what is, after all, a considerably inferior adversary. But victory will not be hastened by pretending that things have just gone swimmingly.

Worse, unless we look critically at both why we went to war in the Balkans, and why we have failed to achieve our ends, I fear the Administration and our NATO allies might com-



MODIFY OUR DEMANDS

John McCain

A Republican advocate of ground troops who was a prisoner of war in Vietnam

mit the gravest mistake we could make: changing our ends to make our means more effective rather than employing more effective means to achieve our ends.

Surely, some of our terms for peace will have to be modified to correspond to new realities on the ground and to

achieve our ultimate ends, which are security for the Kosovans and peace and stability in the Balkans.

Genuine autonomy for Kosovo that includes the presence in Kosovo of thousands of Serb military and security personnel is hard to conceive as practical any more.

I think it would be a pretty hard sell to convince Kosovans that it is safe to return to communities that are policed by the very people who so savagely depopulated them.

Nor do I think it likely that the Kosovo Liberation Army can be persuaded again to accept any status less than independence.

We might need to expand our demands to accomplish our essential purpose. But I worry the Clinton Administration might do the opposite.

I worry that our purpose will be reduced because the Administration is unwilling to change the means we use to accomplish it.

GULF WAR LESSON



Don Rice

Former secretary of the United States Air Force under the Bush Administration

I THINK we made two serious mistakes at the beginning. One was to go in gradually and to over-constrain the air campaign. The second was to rule out ground forces up front.

We seem to be correcting the first mistake as General Clark requests more air resources to broaden and strengthen the air campaign. We might be inclining towards correcting the second.

If both mistakes had not been made, I think we would be further along than we are. The tough part of the mission is to use air power to root out Milosevic's ground forces, his tanks, armoured personnel carriers and his artillery. That is going to take a degree of dedication to the mission that I hope NATO is ready for.

Confronting him with the threat of opposing ground forces would make it easier to get at his own ground forces from the air. If we leave anything from the Gulf War, it is not that air power can find everything hidden on the ground, but rather that no opposing tank army will ever again be able to manoeuvre in the face of modern air power.

□ Photograph: Peter Nicholls



THREE-PRONGED ATTACK

George Joulwan

Nato Supreme Commander Europe 1993-97, architect of Nato's Bosnia operations

MILOSEVIC has the initiative. He is achieving his strategic war aims by reducing the effectiveness of the KLA, driving out refugees, destabilising Montenegro and causing problems in Macedonia.

He is operating within his decision cycle of what he has to get done. What we have been unable to do so far is to seize the initiative. Nato needs more than one option to confront Milosevic.

We in the military talk about combined arms — air, land and sea power. That is

the best synergy we can get. We have more air power than we could hope for, but combined with ground troops we would have synergy.

While doing option A, the air war, you have to plan for options B, C and D. The planning alone may be enough to divert Serb forces from the killing zones of Kosovo.

I have four rules for success: clarity of mission, unity of command, robust rules of engagement and timely political decisions (this last one always comes late).

RUSSIAN ROLE

Anatol Lieven

Russia expert at the International Institute for Strategic Studies

THE West now needs Moscow's help more than at any time since the Gulf War.

Only Russia, through its standing in Belgrade, can bring about any kind of agreed settlement. The fact that Russian relations with the European Union remain good leaves open a line of communication.

Agreement over Kosovo will have to involve Nato peacekeeping forces on the ground under de facto Nato command. This force would also have to include non-Nato troops, including Russians, and be under a non-Nato mandate.

It is a great pity that Nato planners did not think harder about these options, and about the necessity of trying to draw Russia into implementation plans before the bombing started.

The West, hearing Russian anti-Nato rhetoric, may conclude that the relationship has broken down irretrievably and that Russia is too hostile to be allowed any role in talks. This would be an error.

UN SETTLEMENT

Tony Benn

MP for Chesterfield and the leading Labour critic of Britain's policy on Kosovo

THE choice is very straightforward. Either you launch a huge invasion which would lead to a strong and bitter struggle, to which I would obviously be opposed. Or you can take some opportunity to bring it back to the United Nations and sort it out that way.

If you are going to get in a

monitoring force, it cannot be Nato. The Russians fear Nato is moving East. You will have to have non-Nato forces, and only the UN can do that.

If you don't do that, if you try to go on as we are at the moment, the Nato alliance will crack. If you send troops in, it will crack even quicker.

POLITICAL SOLUTION

Tom King

Former Conservative Defence Minister and MP for Bridgwater

IT IS critical for us to get the political wires going again with Russia and Kofi Annan (United Nations Secretary-General) as well as getting the support of the neighbouring nations. We must keep up the military pressure while we pursue these two routes.

I don't see the prospect of a full-scale invasion, but there may have to be a halfway

house. We could set up reserve areas, providing it is made clear it is not an invasion but a measure to provide security for the Kosovans. It need not be just Nato who look over this. It could be Nato countries and Russia. I am against partition, and wouldn't welcome it, but you might have to live with it in the early stages.

ROUND-THE-CLOCK BOMBING

Thomas McInerney

A retired Lieutenant-General who rose to third in command of the US Air Force and a highly decorated Vietnam War pilot

WE should ratchet up to a thousand sorties a day, 24 hours a day, focusing on leadership command and control targets in and around Belgrade. That's all you have to do, I promise you. Then it will be over, history.

We did it in ten days in North Vietnam with the Christmas bombing campaign in De-

cember 1972. They realised we were serious and signed the peace treaty.

We have not yet hit one significant target in Belgrade. We have to get Milosevic to the point where he cannot talk to anyone. He lifts the phone and there is no one on the other end. Let him use carrier pigeons.

PROTECTORATE

Martin Bell

MP for Tatton and former war correspondent

I DON'T see any exit strategy. I don't think we have any option having gone this far. We would have not only abandoned the people of Kosovo but also have destabilised Kosovo, Macedonia and Albania to no purpose. We would also have severely damaged the credibility of Nato.

There are two completion strategies. One is to increase the pressure such that Milosevic would compromise under pressure from his friends in Russia. But that would involve introducing ground troops.

The second is he does not compromise, we go for ground troops, and impose some kind of protectorate



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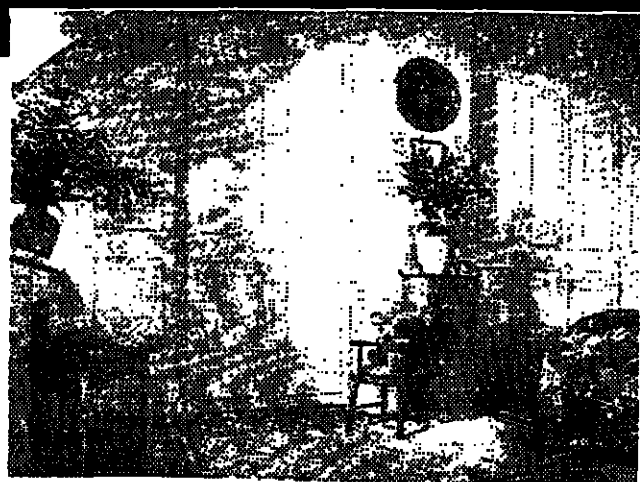
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حکومت الامم

Honesty is best riposte to lies from Belgrade

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE EDITOR

THE best weapon for propagandists in a war is the truth. Until now most propaganda efforts by the Yugoslav authorities have been ineffectual because Nato has been able to counter with facts the regular claims of allied planes being shot down or civilians being slaughtered.

However, the two admissions by Nato this week — that it attacked a passenger train in error while targeting a bridge near Leskovac, and now that allied aircraft struck part of a refugee convoy in Kosovo — have presented Belgrade with an opportunity to extract the maximum advantage.

While Nato is on the defensive, the Yugoslav authorities, who until now have shown nothing but murderous contempt for their Albanian citizens, can weep crocodile tears, as Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, put it yesterday, and escort Western journalists on a guided tour of the scene.

Propaganda backed by horrific images of civilians lying dead on a country road can be a powerful tool in the hands of a dictator who has had years of experience in manipulating his own press and broadcasting organisations.

Accused by Nato of being in political command of Yugoslav troops, special police and paramilitaries who are committing crimes against humanity in Kosovo, President Milosevic will take every opportunity to throw back at Nato the same accusation.

So far, Nato has adopted a prudent policy, countering Belgrade's propaganda with its own brand of propagandist war — including demonising Mr Milosevic — while owning up to errors when they occur, although relating the apologies and regrets to a wider context in which the Yugoslav leader is blamed overall for every death and injury.

The longer the air campaign continues, however, the greater the risk for Nato that more terrible errors will happen, thus providing Mr Milosevic with more deadly propaganda material. The Yugoslav leader will know that the more civilian deaths Nato causes, albeit in error, the more pressure there may be from public opinion to call off the bombers.

On the positive side for Nato governments, public opinion has been largely supportive of the air campaign and will not be fooled by Belgrade's accusation that allied aircraft are deliberately targeting civilians. Refugees who witnessed the Yugoslav attack said that they had assumed the aircraft involved were Serb because they knew Nato would not target civilians, underlining the point that in the propaganda war, the alliance has been winning all the prizes. Nor will the public, in making up its mind about the war, be allowed to forget that it is the "ethnic cleansing", killing and rapes by Mr Milosevic's forces that have led to allied aircraft flying bombing missions over Yugoslavia.

Nevertheless, Mr Milosevic will be pleased with the day's work. For 24 hours, while the Pentagon was putting out confusing signals, casting doubt on Nato's involvement in the attack, Belgrade exploited the alliance's weakest spot. Every day Nato officials have emphasised that the pilots' rules of engagement specifically prohibit releasing bombs unless the target has been identified.

This has been called Nato's "humanitarian war". When such as war causes civilian deaths, Mr Milosevic's propagandists have a field day.

'Images of civilians lying dead can be a powerful tool'



A Kosovo boy now in a refugee camp in Tirana, Albania, with his drawing of a Nato plane entitled "My Desire"

News censorship from front line is better than silence

By GRAHAM PATERSON

RADIO 5 asked John Simpson, the BBC's world affairs editor, yesterday: what did he feel about being accused of being a mouthpiece for President Milosevic's propaganda machine? "It just goes with the turf," he replied nonchalantly from Belgrade.

The few British correspondents still able to report from Belgrade know that both sides in this war see them as the enemy. After several desperately bad days for the Nato war effort — first the bombing of a train and then Wednesday's accidental but horrific attack on Kosovo refugees — Downing Street has turned on the messengers.

Simpson and his fellow reporters, it was whispered, were simply playing a part in the Serbian propaganda battle against Nato. Tightly controlled reports, these sources say, take Serbian claims at face value, highlight civilian casualties and play down Nato's successes.

The "health warnings", they add, that accompany such reports, mentioning Serb press minders and the fact that they are monitored by the authorities, are insufficient.

In a war where public support is essential if the campaign is to be pursued for weeks and months, Western

governments hate the drip, drip of reports of setbacks and military disasters.

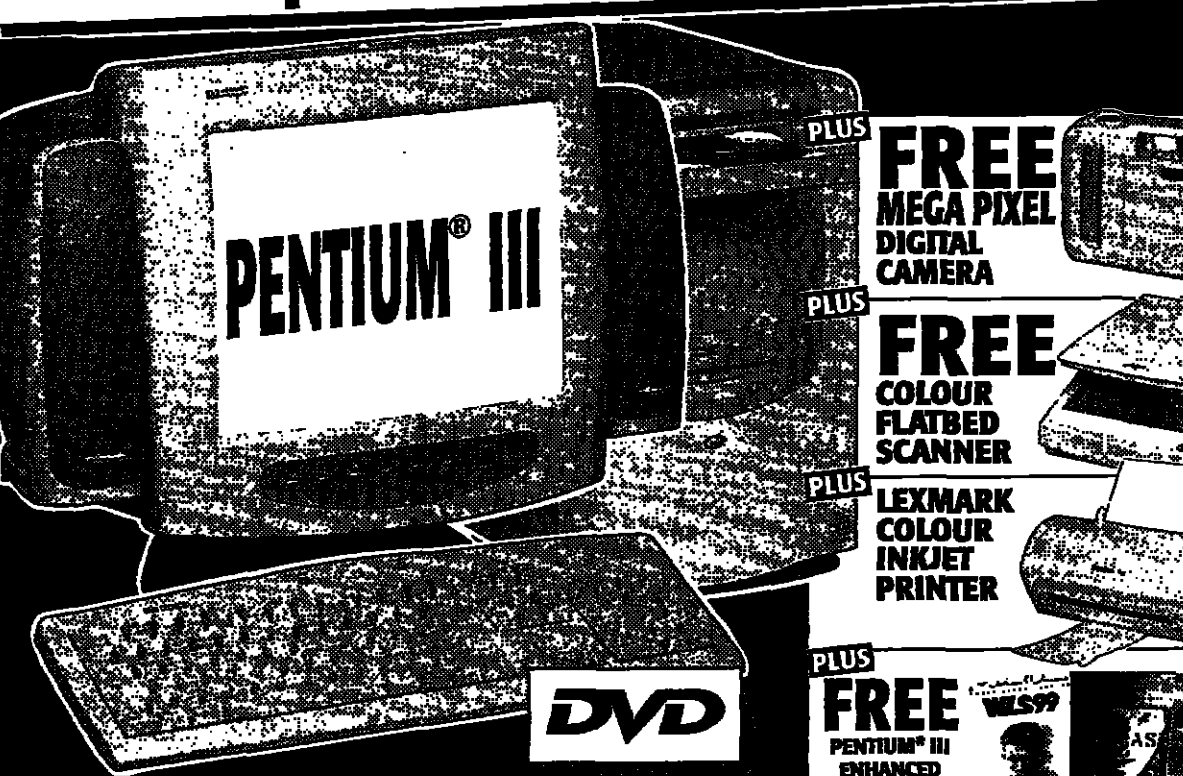
But they are wrong. The reporting from Belgrade has provided an extra dimension to our understanding of this war. The moving reports by, among others, Tom Walker, the Belgrade correspondent of *The Times*, of the murder and funeral of the editor, Slavko Curuvija, revealed the extent of opposition to Mr Milosevic's dictatorship. And if Nato makes the occasional error, is it not that very freedom to know such things that Nato is ultimately fighting for? Only dictatorial governments can "ethnically cleanse" whole provinces.

In Baghdad in 1991, when the then Tory Government made the same charges against Simpson and his colleagues of aiding the enemy, the public were not fooled for a moment. There is no reason either why they should be fooled this time.

Walker reported last week the words of his press minder: "If I was running things, we would have 12 correspondents left and they would mostly be Chinese. The rest are enemies." No kowtowing there. The more Simpson and his ilk annoy the politicians, the better they are doing their jobs.

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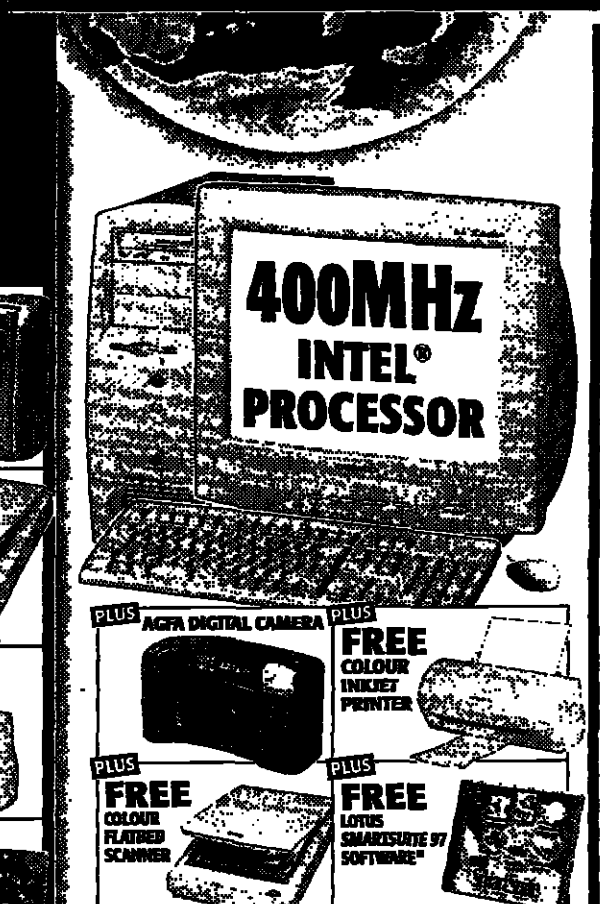
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Death skipper 'looked after No 1'

Captain of a hospitality yacht on which two died had the only lifejacket, writes Paul Wilkinson

THE skipper of an ocean-racing yacht that capsized in rough seas, drowning two passengers, was the only one on board wearing a lifejacket and safety harness, a court was told yesterday.

"The captain looked after No 1," Paul Batty, QC, told Sheffield Crown Court. Colin Jessey was a "supremely arrogant man" who believed his yacht could face anything that the sea could offer.

"The skipper was relatively safe; none of the passengers had this luxury. There was only one lifejacket aboard the yacht at the time of the rescue — he was wearing it."

"There were nine passengers and there were buoyancy aids aboard, but even if Colin Jessey advised them to wear them, which he didn't, there were not enough to go round."



Colin Jessey: he denies manslaughter charge

There were enough harnesses, but the passengers were not instructed how to wear them."

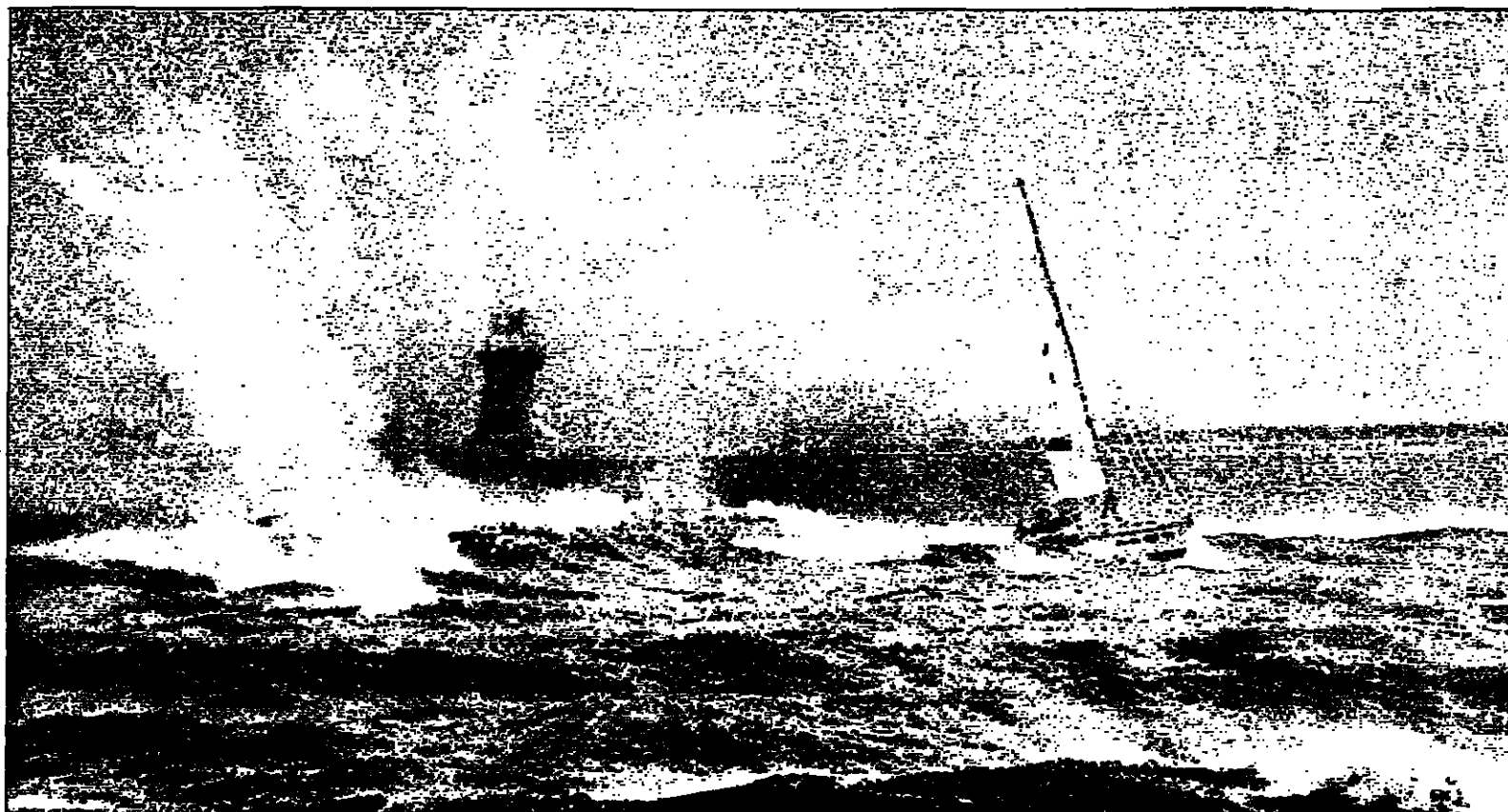
Mr Jessey, 51, from Shoreham, West Sussex, has denied manslaughter and dangerous conduct arising from the incident last April. He had been paid £1,500 to take a party of businessmen for two days' sailing from the Tyne out into the North Sea. His yacht, the *Lone Signature*, encountered mountainous seas as it reached the mouth of the river and was knocked flat.

Three people were swept overboard. One was recovered alive, although seriously injured, but Alan Barwick, 52, and Peter Curry, 45, drowned. In an extensive air and sea rescue effort, the Tyne-mouth lifeboat almost capsized.

Mr Batty told the court: "Peter Curry was heard to shout from the water, 'Save us, save us,' before being swept to his death. Alan Barwick, who was only 10ft away from the boat, was swept away and was soon to be seen floating face down."

"What the prosecution are putting to the jury is: did Colin Jessey take reasonable care of those aboard the yacht that day? He showed a cavalier approach to the safety of his passengers. We suggest his conduct was not merely carelessness but was gross negligence, which is criminal and therefore manslaughter."

"He had been paid for two



The yacht moments before it capsized in huge waves in the mouth of the Tyne last April. Three men were swept overboard, of whom two drowned

days' sailing. He called them hospitality days... but they turned into days of nightmare. The vessel was swamped by a large wave, three men were lost overboard wearing no lifejackets, no buoyancy aids or harnesses, fixing them to the yacht. Had they been wearing them, they would not have been swept overboard and no lives would have been lost."

Mr Batty said that Mr Jes-

sey had not obtained an up-to-date weather forecast or contacted the coastguard. "All he had done was to watch the regional weather forecast the previous day. There was a lot of extreme weather coming into the River Tyne; there was more water coming down to meet the sea. What happens when the weight of the water coming the other way is you

get treacherous conditions at the mouth. That is what was happening on this day."

Conditions were so bad that other vessels, including a fisheries protection boat, had turned back. The jury watched a 15-minute video taken by a tourist, which showed the *Signature* and a large car ferry that was rocking so much its propeller cleared the water. Mr Batty described Mr Jes-

sey as a man who looked the part of a yacht skipper. "However, the circumstances suggest that, even before the yacht left the Tyne basin, he was seriously at fault regarding the safety of his vessel."

Mr Jessey had no crew and failed to demonstrate how to fit buoyancy aids or how a safety harness was worn. He merely told the passengers where the safety harnesses were,

while the buoyancy aids were in short supply, Mr Batty said. All this suggested that, when he left the marina, "the safety of his passengers was low on his agenda. Did he say to his passengers, 'We are not going out there,' or did he say, 'It is going to be a bit lumpy out there, boys, put on your safety harnesses? No, he said, 'Put on your wet gear,' that is all." The trial continues.

Man is held over 'beauty in bath' murder

By Russell Jenkins

POLICE were questioning a man yesterday about the unsolved murder of Cynthia Bolshaw 15 years ago, which became known as the "beauty in the bath" case.

CID officers arrested the 49-year-old suspect at his home in Birkenhead, Wirral, a month after police reopened their files on the case. The man was being held at a police station on Merseyside for further questioning.

The beautician was found naked, except for a necklace and earrings, face down in the bath at her secluded bungalow in Heswall, on the Wirral, in October 1983. She had been strangled, apparently after entertaining a lover.

Mrs Bolshaw, 50, worked as a cosmetics consultant at Browns, a Chester department store. Merseyside Police drew a blank despite an inquiry that concentrated on hundreds of male friends documented in 14 diaries.

Last month the force reopened the files, aiming to exploit new techniques, notably DNA profiling. Police began conducting voluntary saliva swabs on more than 200 men with results checked against a genetic profile garnered from forensic evidence that had long lain untouched.

Police said a man had been arrested at 7.20am yesterday.

Outrage greets suspect's radio appearance

By Michael Harvey

ONE of the five men accused of killing Stephen Lawrence yesterday swore "on his mother's life" that he was innocent of the crime.

To the outrage of the Lawrence family, Gary Dobson appeared on a national radio phone-in and was questioned by presenters and the public live for two hours.

The 23-year-old man, who was acquitted of the murder after the family's private prosecution collapsed, was challenged directly about the murder. He said: "On my mother's life, I am not guilty of this crime. On my mother's life, I don't know who was responsible. If I did know, I would certainly not have let my family go through all of this for the past six years."

"I have had to look into my mother's eyes as she is crying, asking me, 'Why are they doing this to you?'"

Dobson gave a grudging half-apology to the Lawrence family and added he respected them for the way they had acted over the past six years.

The family yesterday condemned his appearance on Talk Radio and anti-racist demonstrators protested outside the radio station's offices in Oxford Street, London.

□ Last night solicitors for the Lawrence family were continuing negotiations with Metropolitan Police lawyers over an offer of up to £100,000 damages for the bungled investigation into Stephen's death. Sources said the final figure could be as high as £250,000.

Boy, 13, guilty of shooting girl in eye

A BOY aged 13 was yesterday convicted of blinding a paper-girl in one eye after firing an air pistol at her. A jury at Exeter Crown Court found the teenager guilty of causing grievous bodily harm in an incident on a Paignton housing estate in May last year.

The defendant cannot be identified for legal reasons but Judge Jeremy Griggs lifted a similar order in respect of the victim after her mother asked that she be allowed to be identified.

Rachel Courtney, 16, told the court that the boy, then aged 12, had spat, thrown stones at her and called her names before asking "Do you know what real pain feels like?" and shooting her. The boy said the injury had been an accident.

The case was adjourned for pre-sentence reports.

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Planet discovery suggests we are not alone

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

ASTRONOMERS have found the first solar system around a star other than the Sun.

Three giant planets are in orbit around the star Upsilon Andromedae, which is 44 light years away, two groups of American astronomers have independently concluded.

The announcement suggests that solar systems like ours are commonplace. The astronomers, from San Francisco State University and the Harvard-Smithsonian Centre for Astrophysics in Cambridge, Massachusetts, reported the results of their investigations at a joint press conference yesterday at the university. Debra Fischer said: "It implies that planets can form more easily than we ever imagined, and that our Milky Way is teeming with planetary systems."

Alan Penny, a British plane-

tary expert from the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory in Didcot, Oxfordshire, described the finding as a major discovery and said it increased the chances of finding Earth-like planets that might harbour life.

One of the planets orbiting Upsilon Andromedae was already known. It is three quarters of the mass of Jupiter and orbits the star at a distance so small that a complete orbit takes less than five days.

The two new planets are even more massive. The middle one is twice the mass of Jupiter and orbits the star in 242 days, while the outer one is four times the mass of Jupiter and orbits once every four years or so.

Robert Noyes, Professor of Astronomy at the Harvard-Smithsonian Centre, said:

"This will shake up the theory of planet formation. A nagging question was whether the massive bodies orbiting in apparent isolation around stars really are planets, but now that we see three around the same star, it is hard to imagine anything else."

A paper announcing the findings has been submitted to the *Astrophysical Journal*.

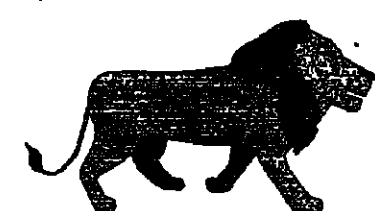
A mile-wide asteroid could collide with Earth in 2039. The chances are less than one in a billion, but the asteroid, 1999 AN10, will require careful watching, say astronomers from Italy, who have worked out its movements. This is because its orbit crosses that of Earth twice a year; perturbations caused by close approaches to the Earth could alter its path sufficiently to make a collision more likely.

NEW HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION IS VISIBLE TO THE NAKED EYE

If the average bacterium was the size of a mouse...

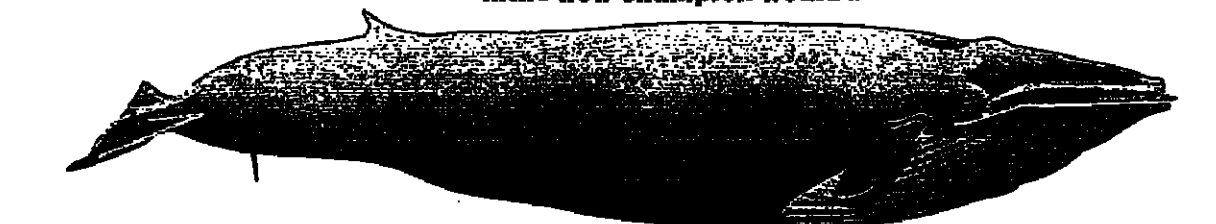


...and the previous record holder was the size of a lion...



Actual size

...the new champion would be the size of a blue whale



The new bacteria *thiomargarita namibiensis*

Bacterial leviathan found on seabed

A GIANT bacterium the size of a full stop has been found living in sediment on the ocean floor off the coast of Namibia (Nigel Hawkes writes).

If the average bacterium was the size of a newborn mouse, the new one would be the size of a blue whale. On the same scale, the previously largest known would be about as big as a lion.

The new bacteria, *Thiomargarita namibiensis*, grow loosely attached to each other, like a string of pearls. They live on sulphides, which they oxidise with the help of nitrates found in seawater.

The finder of the new species, Heide Schulz, of the Max Planck Institute for Marine Microbiology in Bremen, said in *Science*: "I have been working with exotic bacteria for a while now and I knew immediately they were sulphur bacteria..."

my colleagues at first did not believe me because they were so big. The bacteria can store large amounts of nitrates so that, when the supply in the green ooze in which they live is depleted, they can wait three months for a storm to stir up and refresh the sediment. Bacteria, single-celled organisms, are among the simplest of life forms. They inhabit every possible niche on Earth.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Green light for airport smugglers

Travellers are evading import duty because of staff cuts at airports, says the National Audit Office. Bad design lets people see there are no customs staff at some green "nothing to declare" channels, and some red channels have only "honesty phones". Diamonds, computer chips and cigarettes are the main items on which duty is dodged. Since 1990, annual revenue from personal goods has fallen £16 million to £7 million. Cigarette smuggling at provincial airports is thought to cost £50 million.

Asda goes to sea

Asda has launched its own mini-fleet of trawlers. Four vessels from Grimsby will supply the supermarkets with cod in a deal that guarantees the trawler owners and crews £1.5 million. The boats, which will fly the Asda flag, hope to land 200 tonnes each a year.

Yacht drug claim

Roger Russell, 57, of no fixed address, was remanded in custody by magistrates in Ipswich, Suffolk, accused of involvement in drug smuggling after an investigation into an abandoned yacht, found drifting off Aldeburgh with 10 kilograms of cannabis on board.

MTV hit by fire

The music station MTV was off the air for several hours when fire broke out at its studios in Camden, North London. Part of the first floor and most of the roof was destroyed. No one was injured and the cause of the fire is being investigated.

Mum's the rival

A Labour councillor is guaranteed a close rival when she defends her seat in Wakefield - her son. Tony Wright, 44, will stand as an independent Labour candidate at next month's local elections. His mother, Mollie, 65, said: "He's got a fight on his hands."

Losing sparkle

Millennium parties could lose their glitter because of a shortage of sequins, according to Europe's only maker, Brody International, of London, said it was working seven days a week but was struggling to cope with demand from dressmakers.

Bedtime cocoa

The Vegan Society has approved a range of condoms made without animal ingredients or derivatives. Milk protein is used in the production of latex for most condoms, but the German firm Condomi uses cocoa powder instead for the new range.

Why the wait for hip surgery, study asks

By IAN MURRAY
MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

THERE is no fundamental reason why any patient should have a long wait for hip replacement surgery, according to a study of more than 28,000 patients at 40 GP practices.

The study, published today in *The Lancet*, found that in the 35 to 85 age group about 15 people in every thousand need the operation, and each year another two people per thousand develop hip disease.

This suggests there is an overall requirement in England of 46,600 hip operations, say the authors from the Department of Social Medicine at Bristol University. Given that there are 43,500 hip operations a year, this means that only an extra 3,100 are needed to meet demand.

The report says the figures show that "the satisfaction of demand for total hip replacement... is a realistic objective... and there is no fundamental reason why total hip replacement surgery should be denied to those who would benefit from it".

The authors said they carried out the study because hip replacement has one of the longest waiting lists and failure to reduce the wait was a major incentive for NHS reforms.

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حکومت الاموال

Keep-fit fan died after fat surgery

Liposuction on buttocks proved fatal, reports Claudia Joseph

A BRITISH man has died after a three-hour liposuction operation on his buttocks in a Californian clinic.

Paul Freeman, a 25-year-old bodybuilder and fitness instructor, died from blood poisoning after the operation to suck fat through a tube inserted under the skin and attached to a vacuum pump.

At an inquest in Birmingham yesterday, his mother, Pauline, called for tougher restrictions to be placed on cosmetic surgery.

Mr Freeman, who had lived in America for eight years, died in the San Francisco Memorial Hospital in November 1997, three days after the operation, which cost \$3,000 (£1,875). He had not told his parents he was having it.

The inquest was told that Mr Freeman was sent home only two hours after surgery. Alfred Taylor, the coroner's officer, said that Mr Freeman suffered "intolerable pain" at home. A doctor was called out and he was given painkillers and treated for dehydration, before being readmitted to hospital with blood poisoning.

Richard Whittington, the Birmingham Coroner, who recorded a verdict of misadventure, said: "I would be horrified if he had been treated this way in Birmingham. This was quite extensive surgery, but he

was sent home two hours later. This gave no opportunity to measure or monitor him post-operatively."

Speaking after the hearing, his mother said: "Liposuction is a dangerous procedure. People think it's just like having a tooth out, but it's not. It can take anybody's life. It's not something which should be taken lightly."

Mrs Freeman, who is disabled, did not know her son had been operated on until she received a telephone call from one of his friends after he had gone back to hospital.

The parents flew to California, but arrived at the hospital 30 minutes after Mr Freeman had died. He had been due to take his final fitness instruction examinations the following week.

Mrs Freeman, who also has two daughters, said: "Paul didn't want us to know about the operation. Our younger daughter, Rachel, knew he was having minor surgery, but he knew we would try to talk him out of it."

She said that her son, who was 6ft 3in with a 52in chest, was "a very healthy young man. He was big, but it was solid muscle. He was in the gym three or four hours a day."

"We were broken-hearted. It has devastated our family. We never had the chance to say goodbye."

Mr and Mrs Freeman have decided not to take legal action against the doctor who performed the operation. They said it was proving difficult to find a lawyer to prove neglect and malpractice.

Critics have claimed that the cosmetic surgery industry in Britain is poorly monitored, with concern about standards of care. A government inquiry is under way into the regulation of the industry and a consultation paper will be published shortly. The Health Select Committee is also considering the issue.



Freeman: he was 6ft 3in with a 52in chest

Tourist hides from price of fame

By CHRISTINE MIDDAP

A BRITISH backpacker in Australia, who handed in nearly £2,000 she found at a railway station, has been elevated to near-celebrity status for her act of honesty.

Sara Wood, 28, a secretary from Beckenham, southeast London, said she was embarrassed by the "huge fuss" her honesty had created in Perth. She had immediately handed in the bag containing \$5,000 because "it was the right thing to do".

Speaking from Perth, she said: "It's appalling that anyone thinks it was an amazing thing to do. I never had any doubts. The money is not mine: it was quite correct to hand it in to police. Anybody who wouldn't do that should be ashamed of themselves."

But Ms Wood said that, after all the media attention the incident had created, she now "just wanted to go away and hide. My life has been turned upside down."

Ms Wood, who has been travelling for 11 months, said she had always been an honest person. "I've had situations before where I've seen somebody drop a £20 note and I've chased them down the street to tell them. When you find this amount of money, you think it had to be a bit dodgy. If you kept it, you would always think, is it the profits of crime? Does it belong to a pensioner who needs it more than I do? Not handing it in is theft."

If the money is not claimed within a month, and if it is not the proceeds of crime, she will be allowed to keep it.

Engels-Hollandse Beleggings Trust N.V. (English and Dutch Investment Trust)

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NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Annual General Meeting of Shareholders will be held on Wednesday 28 April 1999 at 11.00 hours at the Le Meridien Apollo Hotel, Apollolaan 2, Amsterdam.

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Royal Exchange Assurance is prepared to issue a power of attorney for the same number of shares held in trust as the Certificateholders shall have deposited with Royal Exchange Assurance.

The agenda for the meeting and the related documents, including the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 December 1998 will be available from 15th April 1999 at the offices of the above named.

Board of Management
Engels-Hollandse Beleggings Trust N.V.
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Clint Hallam is progressing well and can now hug his wife with both arms

Arm transplant man is playing piano again

Pioneer patient is expected to gain 70 per cent use of his hand, reports Ian Murray

CLINT HALLAM, who had the world's first forearm and hand transplant last September, is practising at the piano again and can hug his wife with both arms.

Even though Mr Hallam, 48, a New Zealander, dropped out of intensive physiotherapy three months after the operation, to travel, the medical team from St Mary's Hospital, London, writes in *The Lancet* today that he is well on the way to gaining good use of his transplanted arm. "He is progressively able to move his fingers and we cannot complain at all," said Nadey Hakim, of the transplant unit.

"I last saw him a month ago, when he was doing very well. He is in Australia now and seen daily by physiotherapists in Perth, who say he is improving all the time." He said Mr Hallam could expect to gain up to 70 per cent use of his transplanted hand over the next year.

"This operation has proved that this kind of transplant will work, but you have to be very selective about the sort of person who

is offered it, because there are so many potential complications. Whoever has it will have to be on immunosuppressants for life, which means a patient becomes prone to succumb to many more infections. There is also an increased risk of skin cancer and of lymphoma.

"When you explain that to most people, they tend to say: 'Forget it. I'd just stick with my prosthesis.' Mr Hallam was an exception who was prepared to take the risk."

Mr Hallam's right forearm was cut off by a circular saw in 1984 while he was serving a prison term for fraud. An operation to re-implant his own arm

failed and he had to have it removed again in 1989.

He refused to have an artificial limb, but made a study of units that were considering doing limb transplants, including the University of Lyons in France. He was accepted as a potential patient and, in preparation, told to exercise his right arm muscles by pretending he was practising the piano. He reported feeling "phantom limb" sensations of finger movements and cramping pain in the hand he did not have.

When a 41-year-old brain-dead donor was found in France, Mr Hallam was flown there — with an emergency passport because his own had been confiscated as he was being investigated for cheque-book fraud. The investigation has since been dropped.

The 12½-hour operation involved stitching together as many of the muscles, nerves and blood vessels as possible. Within 20 minutes of it finishing, blood was coursing around the transplanted hand and the skin colour was normal.

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Salmond finds it hard to weather the storm

A FOUL mix of sleet and swirling wind blowing off the Moray Firth matches Alex Salmond's mood. On board his party's election battle-bus after another bruising week of campaigning, the SNP leader immediately launches into a scathing attack on the Scottish press, describes Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, as "less than cheap", and snaps at a *Times* photographer for taking too many pictures.

The opinion polls are not good: independence does not after all look to be a prospect this side of the millennium and the *Spectator's* tactician of the year, who normally strikes fear into the heart of Cabinet ministers, is finding it hard to contain his annoyance.

Even his visit the day before to the Western Isles, normally a haven of rectitude, was overshadowed after newspaper reports on how the local SNP candidate, Alasdair Nicholson, had served a prison sentence in the 1970s for trying to burn down government offices in Edinburgh.

One year ago a poll put the SNP 12 points ahead of Labour while nationalist strategists privately maintained they were about ten points in front. Today, the nationalists

The SNP leader's trademark grin is in short supply after a turbulent week, report Jason Allardyce and John Mair

are trailing by the same margin. En route to Elgin from Inverness airport, the *Mission Impossible* video on board the mobile nerve centre that is normally used to ferry rock stars around Britain suddenly seems oddly appropriate.

But Mr Salmond's trademark grin returns briefly as he insists that the SNP is winning the campaign. "We will win the election. I'm absolutely certain." The defining moment in the campaign for Holyrood so far has been Mr Salmond's intervention over the Nato bombings of Kosovo.

Last month the BBC gave him an unprecedented opportunity to speak to Scotland in response to Tony Blair's address on the air-strikes. It could have enhanced Mr Salmond's profile as a statesman, but the words "unpardonable folly", which he used to denounce the attacks, sparked a furious backlash and led Robin Cook to condemn him as "the toast of Bel-

grade". Mr Salmond, who has transformed his party into a credible opposition after years as a fringe movement, is unrepentant. "I knew the broadcast would be criticised. I mean, I am not a fool. I knew it was a controversial thing to say but the very last thing in my mind was a political calculation."

He noted that the MPTam Dalyell had described Mr Cook's attacks on him as cheap. "The only thing I would say about that is if you are cheap you are worth something and I am not certain that the Foreign Secretary is in that category any more."

Mr Salmond, who has been steering his party into the territory formerly occupied by Labour in Scotland, insists that the plight of Kosovan refugees since the strikes began proves that he was right. "The evidence of the past three weeks is overwhelmingly that the Kosovo Albanians have not been helped by the bombing campaign

... and Milosevic, who is a gangster, has not been destabilised inside Serbia."

The SNP has suffered other damaging headlines over plans to increase income tax by a penny to finance an extra £690 million in public services and evidence that an independent Scotland could start life with a £2 billion budget deficit. Mr Salmond refuses to confirm until later in the campaign whether he believes an independent Scotland would have a deficit. He argues that Gordon Brown cannot even say with consistency how big the "black hole" in Scotland's finances would be. "Write that down. It's quite important, son," he barks.

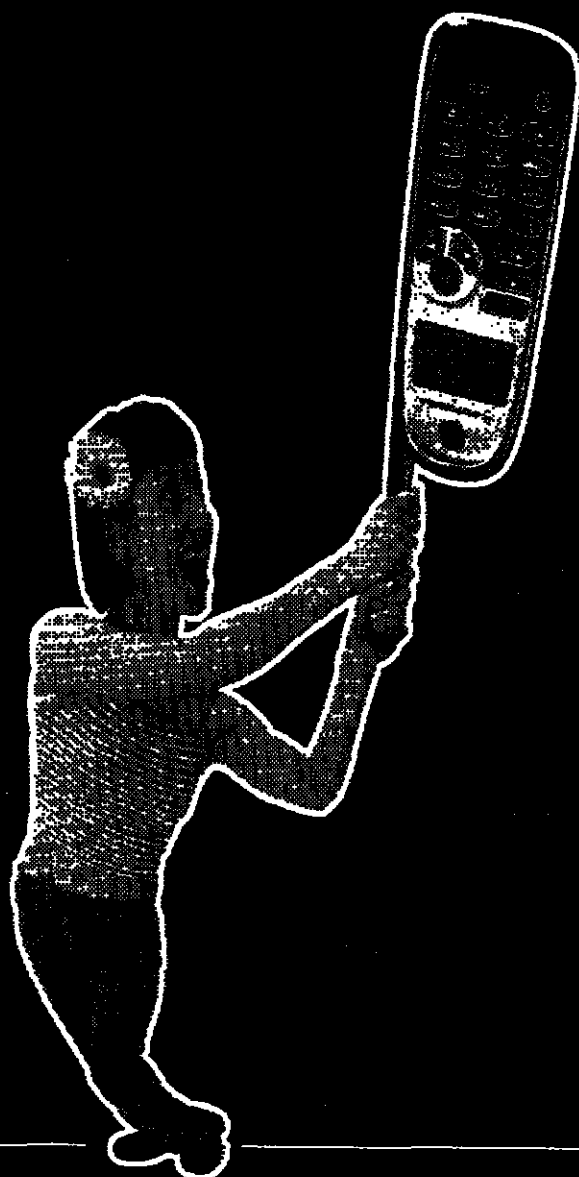
Although even the most favourable poll for the nationalists yesterday showed the SNP seven points behind Labour, Mr Salmond is convinced that his party can win because demoralised Labour supporters will stay at home. Facing the vastly bigger resources of Labour's Millbank machine, the SNP leader knows he is in a David and Goliath style contest. "But David won that battle. It was Goliath who fell," Mr Salmond quips.

Letters, page 23



Mr Salmond's grin returned briefly as he insisted the SNP was winning

offer of the century



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Hague attacks fuel duty rises

WILLIAM HAGUE sought to woo the rural vote in Scotland by condemning Labour's fuel duty rises as a "spiteful attack" on motorists, hauliers and remote communities. During a one-day tour, his first since the campaign began, the Conservative leader announced plans for a charge for foreign hauliers on Britain's roads. Under the BRIT disc scheme (British Road Infrastructure Tax), foreign lorry drivers would pay a daily charge, similar to one levied in other European countries. The money would be used to reduce excise duty on domestic lorries.



Soap actor's 'slip-up'

Labour was accused of breaking rules on political visits to schools during election campaigns after Ross Kemp, the *EastEnders* actor, went to a primary school in Glasgow. The Scottish Liberal Democrats are to complain after Mr Kemp, recently elected as rector of Glasgow University, visited St Stephen's School to support Labour's anti-drug policies.

QUOTE of the day

Alex Salmond on the SNP's fight against unequal odds in the face of Labour's vastly bigger resources:

"But David won that battle. It was Goliath who fell."

today's AGENDA

Donald Dewar will hold a press conference with Craig Brown, the Scotland football coach, before heading for a photo shoot at Hampden Park. The SNP will highlight its "Penny for Scotland" spending plans, while the Conservatives will focus their fire on Liberal Democrat policies, who in turn will attack Labour's education plans.

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Thatcher furious at 'vindictive' Pinochet decision

Straw attacked over go-ahead for extradition, writes Frances Gibb

BARONESS Thatcher launched a bitter personal attack on Jack Straw last night after the Home Secretary announced that General Augusto Pinochet must face extradition proceedings.

As the former Chilean dictator prepared for a lengthy stay in Britain — at least until after Christmas — Lady Thatcher accused the Mr Straw of having put "his ambitions above his duties and so demeaned his office".

She said that Mr Straw's decision was a "vindictive political act", and that "his consideration of the arguments seems to have been superficial and inadequate". She added: "This is not the decision of a fair-minded man."

Mr Straw gave the go-ahead for extradition proceedings against the 83-year-old general, who is wanted by Spain to stand trial on torture allegations, after last month's ruling by the law lords, which greatly reduced the number of charges for which he was deemed answerable.

Mr Straw said yesterday that the remaining charges were extraditable, and that there were no compassionate grounds, such as age or ill health, that should halt proceedings.

The law lords ruled last month that the general had no immunity from prosecution. But they said he could be extradited only on crimes dating from December 1988, when the International Convention on Torture came into force in Britain.

This cut from 31 to three the number of charges against him: one of torture and two of conspiracy to torture. Spain has since issued a list of 33 ex-

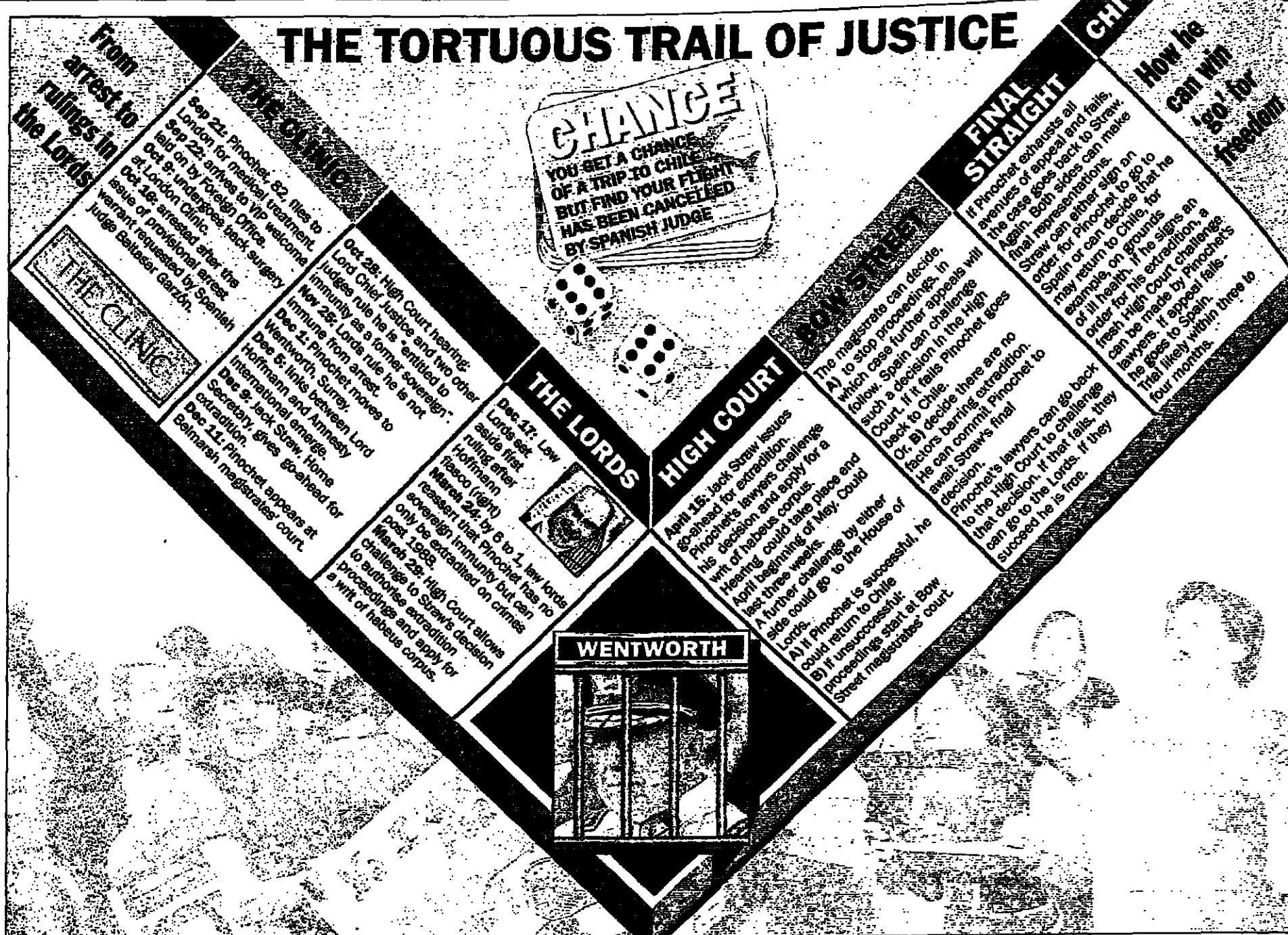
tra cases to bolster the argument for extradition.

The law lords' original ruling, in favour of allowing extradition proceedings on wider charges, was set aside after it emerged that one of them, Lord Hoffmann, had not declared links with Amnesty International.

The case returned yesterday to Bow Street Magistrates' Court, which adjourned proceedings until April 30. Michael Caplan, for General Pinochet, had asked the court for an adjournment so that the general's lawyers could study Mr Straw's decision to issue the Authority to Proceed.

The general remains under effective house arrest in Wentworth, Surrey. His legal team is expected to seek a judicial review of Mr Straw's decision in the High Court. A hearing to seek leave is likely to be held at the end of this month or the beginning of next, and a full hearing may be held in June.

The first step is a High Court hearing tomorrow, which will formally quash the original order by the Home



Secretary for extradition proceedings to go ahead. Given the possibility of appeals, extradition proceedings are unlikely to start therefore before the autumn.

Yesterday the general's supporters, who had hoped that the case would be dropped in the light of last month's law lords ruling, expressed dismay at the Home Secretary's

decision. Lord Lamont of Lerwick said: "This is a political judgment from a weak Home Secretary frightened of his own party. Jack Straw knows perfectly well that, in the end, the judges will free General Pinochet. Meanwhile, No 10 will carry on giving cups of tea to murderers, bombers, torturers, child killers and terrorists from Northern Ireland."

Fernando Barros, a close associate of the general and co-ordinator of the Chilean Reconciliation Movement, said that the ruling would mean only more suffering for the general, Chile and Britain.

But campaigners including Amnesty International, who have pressed for the general to be extradited to Spain, hailed the latest ruling as "a great day for humanity" and another step along the road to justice for his alleged victims.

In a letter to all the parties setting out the Home Secretary's reasons, the Home Office said that he had considered the matter entirely afresh

after the law lords' ruling. He had concluded that the general was accused in Spain of offences that dated from the relevant period and which were extraditable crimes for which he had no immunity as a former head of state.

The letter said: "The UK's obligation is to extradite Senator Pinochet to Spain consistently with the ECE [European Convention on Extradition]. That is the consideration to which the Secretary of State gives particular weight."

Even though the number of charges had dropped, they were still serious and had not happened so long ago that it would be unjust for Pinochet to stand trial for them.

Mr Straw said that he had also taken into account claims that the general could face trial in Chile and the possible effect of proceedings on the stability of Chile and its relations with the Britain.

Lady Thatcher also published details of a letter that she had sent to Mr Straw, set-

ting out "six powerful reasons" for halting the extradition process. These included that the nature of the case had changed and that the number of charges been cut dramatically.

Lady Thatcher said that it was impossible for the general to receive a fair trial in Spain because the case was being brought for political reasons, and that he would be held far more accountable if tried in Chile, where the cut-off point for offences was 1978.

She said that the general was ailing and that it would be highly embarrassing if he died in custody in Britain.

Helen Bamber, director of the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture, based in London, said: "Mr Straw's renewed decision reconfirms what two panels of law lords had previously judged: that men such as Pinochet, Milosevic and Saddam Hussein must stand trial for their crimes against humanity."

Simon Jenkins, page 22

Appeals could take months

GENERAL Pinochet is facing the prospect of many months of legal proceedings.

His lawyers are expected to seek leave to challenge Jack Straw's decision that extradition proceedings should go ahead — the Authority to Proceed — in the High Court. If leave is granted within the next three weeks, a full hearing could take place in June.

But whichever way the High Court rules, a challenge could be made to the House of Lords, either by lawyers for Spain or the general.

If the judicial review and subsequent appeals fail, then the scene moves to Bow Street Magistrates' Court for extradition proceedings before Ronald Bartle, the Chief

Stipendiary Magistrate. With the summer holiday intervening, a hearing is unlikely before the autumn.

Mr Bartle has to be satisfied that the Authority to Proceed relates to an extradition crime and that there are no factors barring extradition under section 9 of the Extradition Act 1989.

Either side can challenge a decision to commit the general to await a final decision by Mr Straw.

When all appeals are exhausted, the Home Secretary receives final representations and makes his final decision on extradition. A trial in Spain would not take place for three to four months after extradition.

Cases of human 'mad cow' disease rise to 40

By IAN MURRAY
MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE number of cases of new-variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease — the human form of "mad cow" disease — has risen to 40.

There were five deaths in the last quarter of 1998, the highest in any three-month pe-

riod since the new variant was identified in 1995, when there were three cases. There were ten deaths in 1996 and 1997, and 16 last year. The latest figures show that one case was notified in the first two months of this year.

A team from the public health department at Imperial College of Medicine at St

Mary's, London, has been trying to find out if there is any greater danger of people who work with animals or carcasses catching the disease.

The team reports in the *British Medical Journal* that the evidence so far is that there is no link. They studied all deaths from dementia-type illnesses between 1982 and 1996 among butchers, abattoir workers, veterinarians, farmers and their wives and found that the incidence of CJD was no higher than to be expected in the general population.

There were 12 deaths attributed to CJD in farmers over the period, but none among butchers, abattoir workers or veterinarians. None of the 13 deaths over the study period from new-variant CJD was in any of these groups.

The team says it is difficult to monitor trends in such rare diseases because of the small number of deaths and doubts about the precision of diagnosis of the causes of death.

Matisse loved his son to the letter

By DALYA ALBERGE
ARTS CORRESPONDENT

HENRI MATISSE communicated with his adult children almost daily by letter, but felt unable to speak to them, according to research into the life of the Post-Impressionist master.

More than 2,000 letters were saved by his art-dealer son Pierre, who died in 1989. Hundreds of unpublished letters from the artists Miró, Chagall and Giacometti are also in the archive, used by John Russell for *Matisse: Father & Son* (Abrams) to be published next month.

Russell said the research overturned the assumption "that father and son were very distant". The Matissees were a secretive family. "None of them talked to each other. Henri loved his son and his son loved him, but they couldn't get through to each other." In a letter to his sister, Pierre wrote: "When



Pierre Matisse: saved his father's letters

we are together at home, we cannot talk or express the least opinion without setting a match to dynamite."

Such tension vanished with pen and paper. Matisse confided about his health and work, including the fact that he measured the time he took on line-drawings "by playing Beethoven symphonies on the gramophone".

Experts back compulsory treatment for mentally ill

By ALEXANDRA FREAN
SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

PLANS to allow the compulsory treatment of psychiatric patients against their will received official backing yesterday from a panel of experts formed by the Government. A survey by a mental health group also found a majority in favour of forced treatment.

The Mental Health Act Review Expert Committee said it was in favour of compulsory treatment, provided it was overseen and approved by an independent body. Consideration must be given to each patient's capacity to consent to treatment and, where possible, ways should be found to enforce compulsory treatment outside hospital, the panel said.

The committee was established last year by Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, who said that a "root and branch" review of mental health legislation was needed because much

of current practice was "based on the needs and therapies of a bygone age". The review recognises that fundamental changes are needed to the policy of care in the community, which has been criticised after killings by psychiatric patients.

Professor Geneva Richardson, chair of the committee, said that the members had been conscious of the need to improve public confidence in the system. The committee's

final recommendations will be sent to ministers in July.

Publication of the document coincided with a survey of 2,300 mental health patients, carers and health professionals by the National Schizophrenia Fellowship. A third said that the threat of compulsory treatment would stop people seeking help, but 58 per cent thought it was a good idea.

Letters, page 23

Inside Section 2

Filling the magazine market for 40-plus women: memories of John Junor (right), by a managing director, why ITV was wrong to move News at Ten

Media Times, page 38-41



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Beauty secrets of a Roman lady

Objects unearthed with bones of a woman provide clues to her status, writes **Dalya Alberge**

AN EXQUISITE glass vessel that might have contained mascara, eyeliner or an oily perfume for use in the afterlife is among grave goods unearthed with the coffin of a young Roman woman in the City of London.

It is hoped that the vessel, and other treasured objects found at the foot of the stone sarcophagus containing the woman's lead coffin, will provide clues to her identity. Archaeologists believe that the 4th-century skeleton, revealed when the coffin was opened on Wednesday night, is that of the wife or daughter of a member of Roman Britain's elite.

At the Museum of London yesterday, the delicate process of removing a deep layer of silt from the coffin began. As the sediment was scraped away, it emerged that a pillow of neatly arranged leaves had been placed under the woman's head. Nothing like it had been found elsewhere. Simon Thurley, the director of the museum, said: "She was very carefully laid down. It is incredibly touching and so immediate."

As work progressed, matted gold thread, which might be part of a textile, was found. A second glass vessel — about 1ft long and probably used for food — was found between the coffin and the sarcophagus.

Little is known about 4th-century burial practices in Britain, and archaeologists are hoping to learn a great deal from the tomb, which grave robbers who ransacked other graves at the site in Spitalfields somehow missed.

John Shepherd, an authority on Roman glass, said that "whatever was inside [the vessel] was precious". Taryn Nixon, the museum's chief archaeologist, noted its "remarkable" trailed-glass decoration and said that the grave goods not only suggested a wealthy woman, but someone

"much loved". She added: "Grave goods were very important... they helped the soul on its journey to the afterworld. They comforted the dead and comforted the living in their grief." Through them they were getting "a very human perspective", because they showed as much about the living as the dead.

Among the grave goods were a jet disc and rod, the exact purpose of which is unclear. Jet, a fairly expensive material in Roman times, was used as jewellery or for the hair. The disc might have been a pendant, Jenny Hall, curator of the museum's Roman gallery, said.

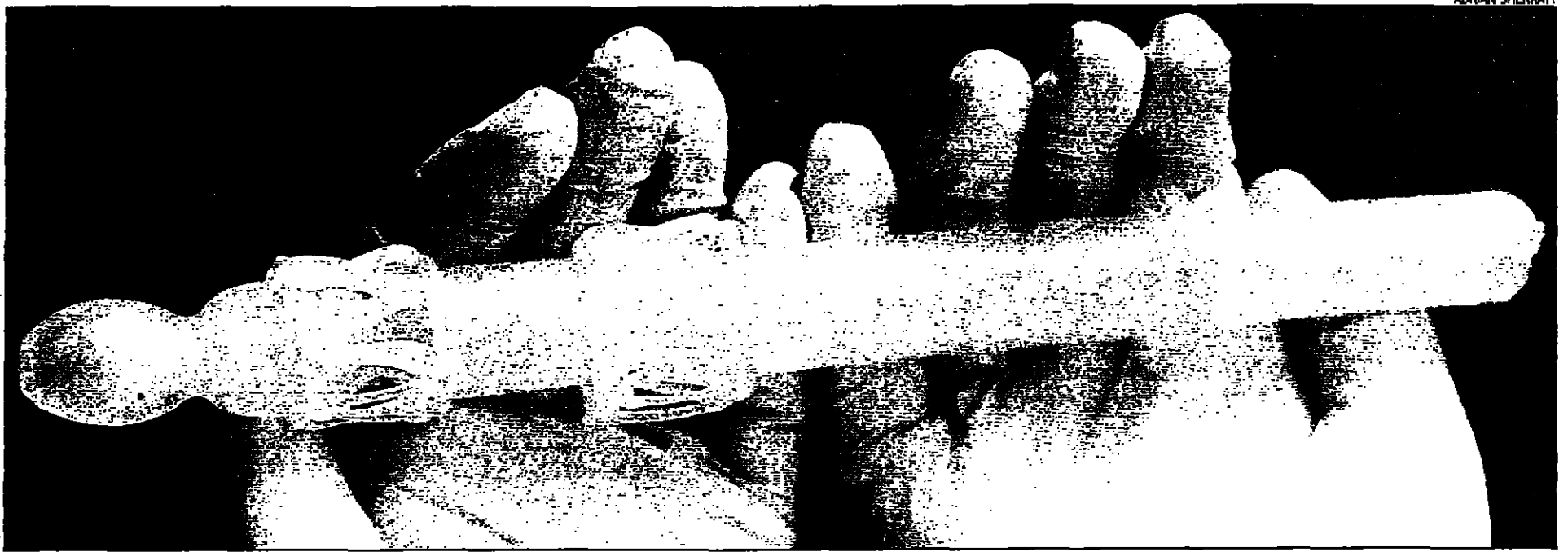
A jet canister might have been a jewellery box. It is still encased in a lump of earth and the archaeologists were yesterday hoping that there might be jewels inside.

It is unlikely that the woman's bones, once removed from the silt in the coffin, will reveal why she died, unless she suffered from a severe case of cancer. Her early death — she was probably in her twenties — was not unusual at a time when only 10 per cent of the population lived beyond 45.

Knowledge of medicine was rudimentary and stomach upsets and food poisoning were among the most common causes of death.

Women commonly died in childbirth and the archaeologists will be looking for any signs that this woman was pregnant. Her skull, resting on its side, will be examined for signs of a physical blow. It has already been noted that she had lost at least one tooth.

Scientists from Oxford University have taken samples for DNA testing, which should establish her racial mix. Another test could detect whether she had experienced a change of climate. The skeleton is on view at the Museum of London until April 25.



The decorated glass vessel and other objects were found at the foot of the sarcophagus at the burial site in Spitalfields. Below left, opening the lead coffin at the Museum of London



Mystery woman lived during best of times in Londinium

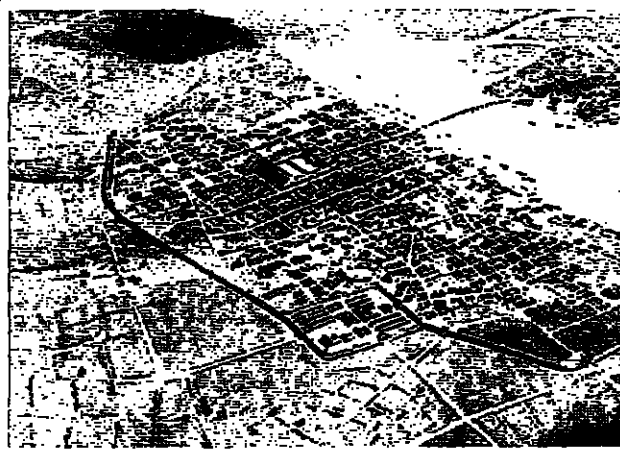
By ALAN HAMILTON

LIFE was good for an uptown girl in 4th-century Londinium. With the central heating blazing away in her comfortable villa on the edge of the administrative capital of southern Britannia, she could afford to ignore the political troubles gripping the rest of the province.

London had declined slightly in influence, with the growing importance of York as the capital of the northern province. But it was still thriving and well-developed, with its large forum, its temple of Mithras, its theatre, bath-houses and its encircling wall on the landward side. And it remained the place where the Imperial treasury was kept.

Should our young woman have wished to travel, the Romans had completed more first-class roads than John Prescott is ever likely to. With the population of Britain estimated at five million, the traffic jam had yet to be invented.

By the 4th century Britain was thoroughly Romanised, except for the Celtic fringes of the North and West, which occupied most of the attention



Londinium: a circle marks the woman's burial place

of 50,000 soldiers in three legions permanently garrisoned in Britain. The only other cloud on the horizon was the rebellion by the general Carausius, causing civil strife until the rebels were overcome by the authorities in AD296. Thereafter, military and civil powers were separated and the primary role of governors was to act less as military generals than to be efficient tax collectors.

Our woman may have been the daughter of a high Ro-

man official, perhaps even a governor. But she may also have belonged to the prosperous commercial and professional middle class, who lived well on the proceeds of trade in their hypocaust-heated villas with their walls of brick and Kentish ragstone and their ornate mosaic floors, one of the commonest Roman signals of prosperity.

The climate then is thought to have been much the same as it is now, if perhaps a shade warmer. Agriculture was sufficiently well developed to provision three legions as well as the civilian population. However, our young woman's household would have imported olive oil from the Continent, along with fish sauce, an early version of Lea and Perrins that appears to have been an ingredient of almost every Romano-British dish, whether fish from the Thames or deer and wild boar from the encircling forests.

Roman cooks made much use of herbs, including dill, coriander and fennel, and there is evidence of plentiful apples, pears, quinces, cherries and plums, as well as cucumbers and peas. Olives and figs were imported from Italy.

It was probably the heyday of the Roman occupation. But in AD410 the Romano-British, tired of an excessive tax burden to support the imperial bureaucracy, threw out the last remaining imperial officials, not knowing they were entering a darker age of barbarian raids on their undefended land. The young woman in the coffin had had the best of it.

KOSOVO CRISIS

THE CRISIS CONTINUES

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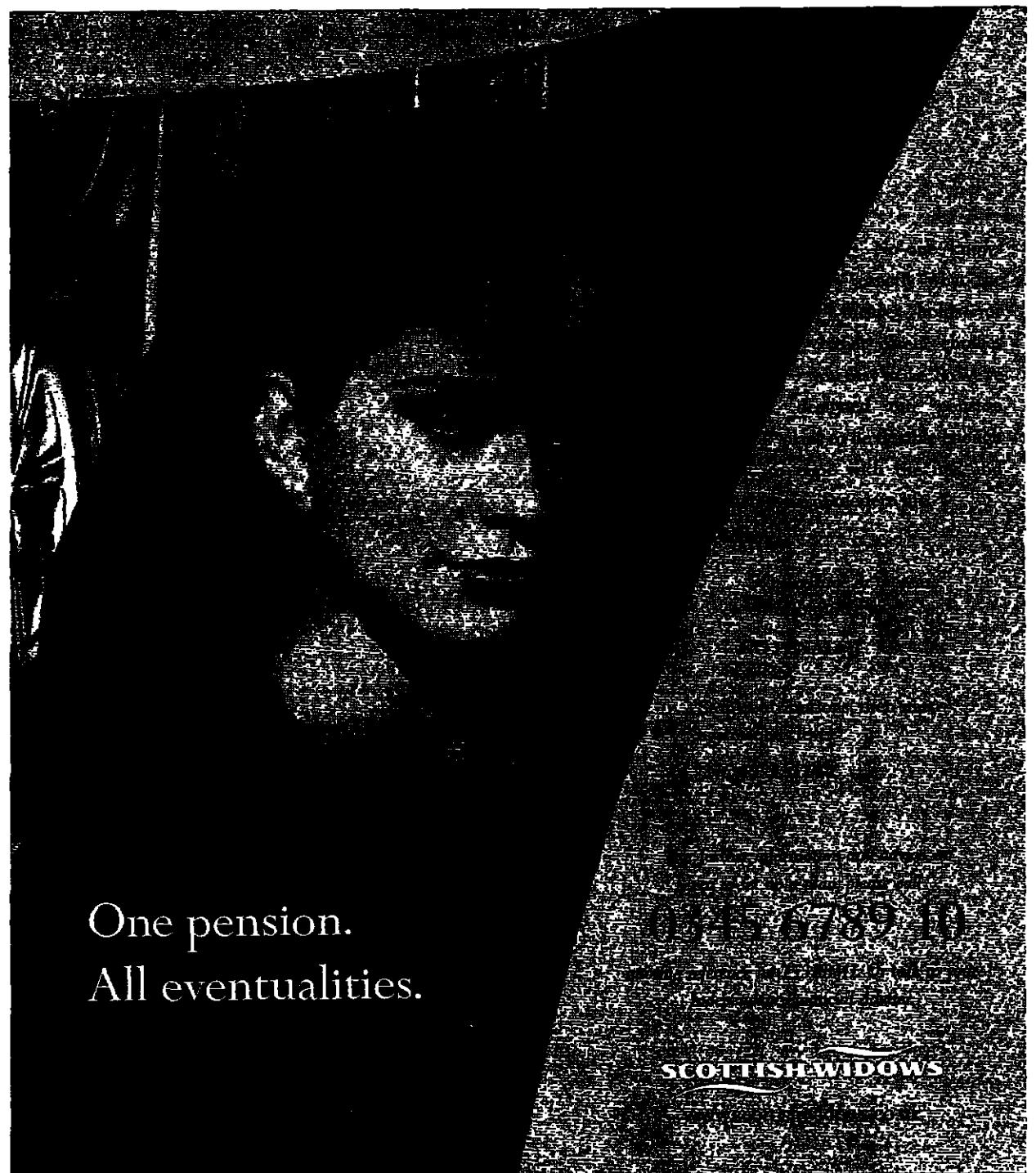
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Bhutto faces jail and £5m bribes fine

BENAZIR BHUTTO, former Prime Minister of Pakistan, and her husband, Asif Ali Zardari, were sentenced yesterday to five years in jail and fined £5 million on corruption charges. The conviction will lead to her disqualification from politics for five years.

Bhutto, who is in London, said last night that the conviction amounted to political victimisation and added that she would return home to face the consequences. It is clear that she will be jailed on her arrival. Zardari, who is facing trial on charges including murder and corruption, has been in prison for the past two and a half years.

The two-member bench of the Rawalpindi branch of the Lahore High Court headed by Justice Abdul Qayyum said in its judgment that the prosecution evidence proved that the couple received millions of pounds in bribes.

Bhutto was accused of awarding contracts to a Swiss company in return for bribes from it. It is the first time in Pakistan's history that a former Prime Minister, who is also a leader of the opposition, has been convicted on corruption charges and disqualified

Former leader vows to appeal against 'political verdict', writes Zahid Hussain

from politics. Bhutto, appearing on BBC television, denied the charges and accused the judges of being biased and of being cronies of the Nawaz Sharif Government. She said she would challenge her conviction in the Supreme Court.

In Islamabad, her party spokesman said he did not think Bhutto would be arrested on return home because "we will get some relief from the Supreme Court before her arrival".

Bhutto is facing trial in five other cases of corruption by different courts across the country. There were indications that she may be convicted on those counts too.

Corruption was cited as the main reason when her second Government was dismissed in November 1996. The action was upheld by the Supreme

Court and charges of misdeeds led to her Pakistan People's Party's humiliating defeat in the election of February 1997.

Bhutto suffered a serious political setback with the revelations in September 1997 of the existence of Swiss bank accounts in the name of several offshore companies allegedly owned by her husband.

Government investigators said that millions of pounds received by the couple in bribes and commissions were transferred into those accounts. Bhutto denied that she had any links with the companies and the bank accounts.

Although few can deny the allegations of widespread corruption in Bhutto's administration, the handling of the investigation by Saifur Rehman, who is head of a blatantly partial anti-corruption bureau as well as being an aide of Mr Sharif, has made the whole process controversial.

Missile test: Pakistan carried out its second ballistic missile test in 24 hours in defiance of international pressure not to fuel an worsening arms race with India. The Shaheen (Eagle) missile has a range of 375 miles. (AFP)



Benazir Bhutto in London yesterday. She "is to go home to face the consequences"

Sudden verdict 'diverts attention from tests'

THE former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto, denounced the timing of yesterday's verdict as "a cheap political trick" by Nawaz Sharif, the Prime Minister, to divert hostile international attention from the country's ballistic missile tests.

The ruling came suddenly, while she was still appealing to have witnesses heard. "It is a butchery of justice," she said in London and vowed to risk jail by going home to fight for her rights.

"All the allegations are false. It's been a real butchery of a trial, and I am shocked and distressed," said Oxford-educated Bhutto, who has

Ex-leader claims tit-for-tat missile race with India was behind abrupt verdict, says Vanora Bennett

been in London this week while her trial went on in Rawalpindi. "They are trying to take away my right of liberty, my right to contest elections and destroy my independent means so that I cannot fight. It is an abuse of the judicial process. I plan to return next week. Pakistan is where my home is. I think it's better for me to return even if I am imprisoned."

"I think the reason they hur-

ried with this trial was because yesterday they reacted to the Indian trap of test-firing a ballistic missile. India knew that, whatever it does, copycat Nawaz Sharif would follow suit. They wanted to divert international opinion away from the ballistic test. That is why in the middle of the trial they decided to announce the judgment."

For more than a decade, corruption allegations have tainted

Islamabad politics as Mr Sharif and the liberal Bhutto each came to power and each was removed early from it, both on corruption charges.

Once praised as a symbol of democracy, Bhutto, 45, has spent the three years since she last lost power scrambling to rebut charges that her family took bribes estimated by the authorities in Islamabad as worth £1 billion.

Because Mr Sharif is close to Pakistan's powerful generals, Bhutto accuses the Prime Minister of undermining the country's judicial independence and democracy to pursue a vendetta against her. She dates the feud from the 1977

toppling of her father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, by General Muhammad Zia ul-Haq, who imposed martial law and whom Bhutto calls Mr Sharif's mentor.

"These are people who killed my father to remove him from the political scene, and they are trying to eliminate me, to do my political killing," she said.

Bhutto paints the battle for Pakistani hearts as a fight between two forces, "the force of theocracy as represented by Mr Sharif, and the force of liberalism as represented by me. The verdict is still out on who will win."

Both Bhuttos have had a

magnetic appeal for Pakistan's poor. But both were a disappointment in office, exhausting their energies in political manoeuvring and, their critics say, in sleazy politics.

Charges of corruption did not stick after Bhutto's first dismissal, in 1990. But since the second dismissal, in 1996, her reputation has been compromised as the investigation moved beyond Pakistan. Last year, a Swiss magistrate said that he had amassed enough evidence to indict Bhutto on money-laundering charges. The evidence he sent to the trial included documentation of the purchase of a diamond necklace worth £100,000.

WORLD IN BRIEF

Poll fraud ends Algeria hopes

Paris: After a seven-year civil war of medieval barbarity, which has cost an estimated 700,000 lives, Algeria yesterday failed to organise a credible election, thereby shutting the door on any hopes for peace (Adam Sage writes).

With only the Government-approved candidate left in the race after the rest withdrew in protest at alleged vote-rigging, the authorities are bracing themselves today for mass protests. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, 62, the only candidate left in the race, said he was ready to assume power despite the controversy over the poll. M. Bouteflika, a former Foreign Minister, is backed by the army, a large section of the political establishment and the country's most powerful trade union.

KLM shreds squirrels

Amsterdam: KLM, the Dutch airline, apologised for using a shredding machine to kill 440 Chinese squirrels shipped illegally to The Netherlands. Reacting to public disgust, it called the slaughter, in which the animals were dropped, apparently alive, into a shredder of the type common in the poultry industry, an unethical mistake. But it said it had little choice after failing to find a home for the animals, which arrived from China last week without proper documentation. (AP)

Hillary's invitation

Washington: President Clinton and his wife may be plagued by rumours about their relationship but Hillary Clinton is set to paint a picture of domestic bliss (Damian Whitworth writes). She is writing a book, *An Invitation to the White House*, about their home entertaining, from visits by heads of state and official delegations to traditional annual receptions, private parties and Christmas celebrations — all lavishly illustrated with photographs, guest lists and recipes.

Netanyahu ally jailed

Jerusalem: Ariele Deri, right, a key ally of Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, was jailed for four years for corruption — a sentence that, ironically, could boost support for Mr Netanyahu in the general election on May 17 (Christopher Walker writes). Political observers said that the sentence on Deri, leader of the ultra-Orthodox, ethnically-based Shas party, could rally its Sephardic supporters to the polls.



Shooting baby lives

Sydney: A baby girl was delivered alive after her eight-months pregnant mother, 26, shot herself in the head. The baby was in a critical condition in Canberra Hospital after being airlifted from Temora in southern New South Wales, police said. The woman, the wife of a police officer, was found dead by her husband at her home. (AFP)

Six killed in air crash

Shanghai: A Korean Air MD11 cargo plane crashed near here leaving at least six dead and more than 40 people on the ground injured, officials said. Flight KE 6316 crashed in heavy rain shortly after take-off from Shanghai's Hongqiao airport. A senior Korean Air official said that a bomb may have caused the crash, but this had not been verified. (AFP)

VINCE VAUGHN

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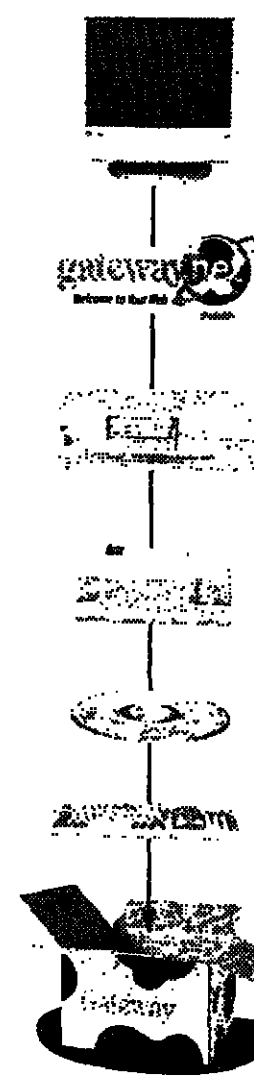
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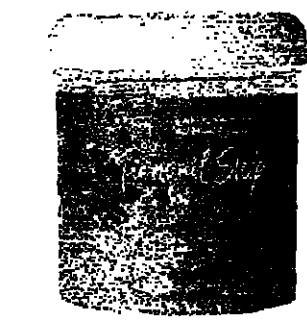
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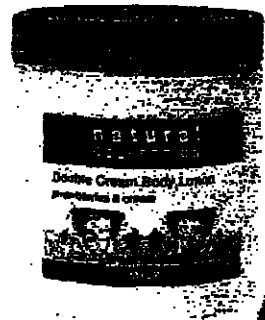
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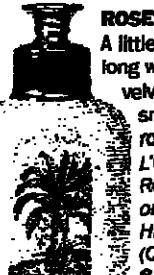
MILK, £2.50
A powerful and nourishing moisturiser results in smooth skin but the sickly candyfloss scent is too potent for comfort. Natural Collection at Boots stores nationwide (0845-0708090) 7/10



NEROLI, £8.99
Easy to apply and quickly absorbed, leaving skin soft. A definite improvement after just three days. Tisserand mail order (01273 325666) 10/10



TOUCH, £20
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ROSEWOOD, £9.95
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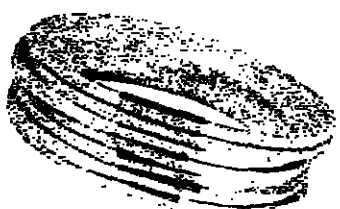
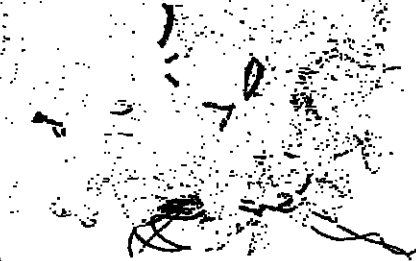
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Objects of desire

■ Forget the Christmas tree connotations, these fairy lights have had a spring makeover, transforming them into wild pink roses. £28.50 for 20 lights, by Sally and Lucy Wadge (0171-377 0597)



■ For serious sinners who need constant reminding not to stray, Lara Boeling's coloured rubber bracelets are available in packs of seven. Each bracelet has one of the seven deadly sins engraved on it in silver. £45 at Selfridges, Oxford Street W1 (0171-629 1234)

Wrapping up a head sculpture



Preparation is all: the line between looking like the walking wounded and a handsome courtesan is as fine as the most fragile muslin wrap

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Alex O'Connell finds a Sikh teacher who hides her hair in a seductive turban

While less sculptured headgear sits on your crown like a dead cat riding an upside-down breakfast bowl, the turban is a sleek, shapely alternative that turns a boy into a warrior and a girl into a princess.

Since the early Eighties, when owners of New York art galleries teamed them with cigarette holders and bawling jumpers, I have always wanted to cover my pate with a piece of crushed velvet. Not only do turbans make the most drab boys look like Rudolph Valentino in *The Sheik* or Richard Burton in *The Rains of Ranchpur*, they can also conceal unwashed locks or that unfortunate *Prisoner Cell Block H* hairdo that your hairdresser insisted was "very Joan of Arc".

But the line between looking like the walking wounded and a handsome courtesan is as fine as the most fragile muslin wrap. And although it looks as though it should be as simple as tying your laces, getting a turban tied in the proper way may be the difference between holding your head up high and spending the evening in the Ladies' Stabbing yourself with a handful of kirby grips.

In the past the most famous Hollywood turban-wearers have had a team of assistants on hand to fold and flatter them. It is most unlikely that

the Latin actress Carmen Miranda, known as the Brazilian Bombshell, who decorated hers with fruit, and the Twenties seductress Gloria Swanson, whose fishnet half-turban matched her long, fingerless gloves, managed by themselves. But ever since my mother gave me a receding hairline with her fierce pre-school hair-plaiting sessions, I have always taken full responsibility for my fashion mistakes.

I decided to get some training from a man who knows how: a Sikh teacher who has been giving lessons in turban-tying at the Victoria and Albert Museum to coincide with an exhibition to mark 300 years of Sikhism.

Traditionally, turbans were worn by Sikhs to keep long hair neat and tidy. The Sikh holy book, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji*, had a motto: "Handsome is thy turban and sweet is thy speech." My teacher, Mohinder Singh Mand from Hounslow, a turban-shaped man with magic hands, had both these attributes.

Preparation is all, he insisted. Before you put the material anywhere near your head, two people must stretch the five-

metre cloth and fold it together. By the end of the display I figured that even Joan Crawford, the most loyal turban-wearer who once did a nine-city promotion without taking hers off, would have torn her hair out before tying the topknot.

While I perched on a stool Singh Mand explained the importance of the first fold. He wrapped the cloth tightly - making sure that the material was lower on the right side of my head and higher on the left - until my ears were throbbing like Meatloaf's amplifier.

When my skull was almost covered and only my crown exposed, he pulled the first fold back and fanned it open to cover the bare bit before tucking the last fold in at the back. I looked like Joan Collins. Then began the unwrapping process. Rather than my whirling around like a dervish while my hair was uncovered, the turban was removed in a couple of speedy motions.

Shortly afterwards I tried to find suitably long scarves so I could re-enact the scene. At Joseph I found toffee-and-cream stripes made by the young designer Neisha

Crosland. For an extravagant £90 they are as light as a spider's web and made me feel like a Victorian lady explorer.

For those who can't sleep unless their dusters have a designer label, Gucci has two-metre flowery scarves in Pucci-style pinks, yellows, blacks and greens made from crushed georgette silk for £115.

For a snip of the price Jigsaw has some oversized hankies in black and white cotton for £6.95. Unless you have a nose the size of a DC10, they are best wrapped around the head. Most elegant is Agnes B, which has the most beautiful off-white/lilac material strips in the lightest linen for £52.

But cheap and authentic cloth can be found at any good Indian material shop for a fraction of the cost. For leopardskin and printed turban material in African designs, try Pitch 17 of Brixton Market, where long scarves sell for between £2.50 and £7.99. And if you still cannot face coming back from the supermarket knowing that your head is bigger than your shopping bag, the Aquila hair turban is ideal for the nervous novice. The super-absorbent strip that I found in Harrods for £19.95 will curb summer colds and make you feel like a vintage Elizabeth Taylor.

Jane Shilling is on holiday.

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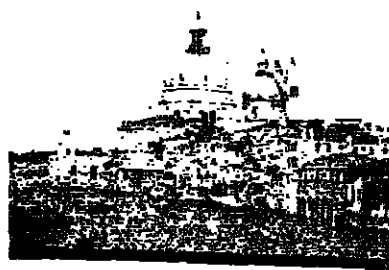
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مكتبة الادب

'I feel weary. When will this madness end?'

Thursday, March 25

Yesterday, Nato launched into war against Serbia. I married Serge, a doctor, in January 1994 in his home town of Leskovac, in Southeast Serbia, and we have visited his family there once or twice a year ever since. The fear that they may now be bombed is like nothing I have experienced: I am quivering with tension.

As I am about to leave the office, Serge phones to say our neighbours have called to apologise for the bombing. They are insisting that they take us, and our three-year-old daughter Isabella, out for a drink in our local Café Rouge to try to cheer us up.

I meet them there and we have a wonderful hour's respite from the war. We arrive home at 9.30 feeling relaxed for the first time in two days. Almost immediately, the phone rings. It is a friend in Sweden, calling to tell us that Leskovac has been bombed.

Ten minutes later, we get through to Serge's parents, Vida and Ljubisa. All the windows in their house have shattered, but they are unharmed. I am weak with relief but feel as though we are all in a surreal film: I cannot believe this is happening.

There are no air-raid shelters in Leskovac, a small town about the size of Maidenhead which has two military barracks, one disused. Vida and Ljubisa, who are in their late fifties, had realised they could not shelter in their cellar because it still contains some oil for their central heating. My father-in-law, a civil engineer, had decided the safest spot was in a door-frame in the centre of the house. So there they sat, for several hours, while the sirens wailed, until finally they heard two explosions, followed by a soft pattering sound which they took to be rain.

Overcome by curiosity, they plucked up courage to look through a window at the back of the house. The sky was spectacular: shades of crimson and orange, really rather beautiful," says Vida. "And then we realised that the sound was not rain, but little pieces of debris drifting down."

We spend the next two hours on the phone, calling relatives and friends. They are all unhurt, but their fear is overwhelming. Serge's 20-year-old cousin Ivana is literally hysterical. We feel powerless, furious and guilty, all at once, that they are in danger and we are not.

At 11.30 we realise we have not even had dinner, but are too exhausted to contemplate so much as buttering a slice of bread. For the second night running, Isabella has fallen asleep on the sofa. We have got to get a grip.

Friday, March 26
The response to my piece in *The Times* takes me completely by surprise. People are universally warm and sympathetic. I feel uplifted and then, when *Times Magazine* columnist John Diamond sends me a fax saying how moved he is, ending with "it must be awful for you" - humbled. You can never, of course, compare suffering: nevertheless, it seems to me that having no tongue and contemplating your death from cancer is a worse form of suffering than ours - albeit just as arbitrary.

In the evening we call Serge's parents. The bombs that fell on Leskovac were dropped by RAF Harriers; they destroyed the barracks, but also (presumably by mistake) Serge's old school. This explains why Vida and Ljubisa's windows shattered: the barracks are two miles away, but the school is only 500 metres or so distant. The news that his school has been bombed - by the British - sends Serge into a state of almost comical bewilderment.

Sunday, March 28
We are spending the weekend with my brother and his family in Sussex. My parents are here too, and we are very deliberately not watching the news. For all our sakes, but especially for Isabella's, we desperately

Three weeks ago Sandra Parsons, who is married to a Serb, gave her reaction to the Nato offensive.

Here is her diary of the war

need an injection of something approaching normality. We go to the beach, where Isabella and her two-year-old cousin Myles spend a happy hour building sandcastles.

My mother says she understands what we are going through: "This is how it was for us in the Second World War," she says gently. "Never knowing whether people you loved were going to be killed. You will learn to live with it. You must." As she is currently undergoing painful chemotherapy with enormous stoicism, I take her point.

Tuesday, March 30
Dreadful stories of thousands of refugees fleeing Kosovo. All human misery is on their faces. Oddly, I feel I empathise with them even more than I would have done were I not connected to the country so persecuting them.

Thursday, April 1
Isabella is playing one of her favourite games, pretending to call a friend on her toy phone. "Mmm, yes, how are you?" she says chattily into the receiver. "Yes, they threw bombs at their houses. Terrible, isn't it?" Of course, she does not know what a bomb is, but my stomach is watery with shock.

Apart from the night the bombing began, we have been scrupulous in never watching the news, or talking about the war, unless she is asleep. But clearly she has overheard us on the phone, and inevitably she picks up on the undercurrent of tension which, try as we might, we cannot altogether disguise. She has taken to coming into our bed every night and we have made no effort to return her to her own room: we are suffused with an almost animal instinct to hold her close. She is the only one of our family we can at least attempt to protect.

ous trickle out as they were intimidated, beaten up and burnt out of their homes. Milosevic cunningly exploited that discontent by promising to remove Kosovo's autonomy, and as a result swept to power in 1997. The hatred is equal on both sides.

In addition, the Serbs will point out that no one cared when 800,000 of them were ethnically cleansed from Croatia and western Bosnia in the Bosnian War, and that the West was only too happy to hail Milosevic as the man of the moment when it came to the Dayton agreement.

Serge is beside himself with emotional exhaustion; confused and in despair. He and his family have never shared the Serbian taste for nationalism: they were not brought up that way. It is an element of his country he loathes, and does not properly understand.

As we go back to bed at 3am, he is adamant that he does not want to watch, or read, any more about this war. He left Serbia in 1992 to avoid being called up to fight in the Bosnian War; he is finding this latest grim episode in Serbia's history too much to bear. "The one thing I am sure of is that this is the end of Serbia. I only want to know that my family are alive every day. Just tell me when it's all over."

Saturday, April 10
It is the day before the Orthodox Serbian Easter Day, and under Vida's instructions I go with Isabella to the Serbian Orthodox church in search of the special dye used to paint eggs. The doors are locked: I try them again and a priest opens them. "Are you open?" I ask, in English.

"Come in," he says, clearly astonished as to why an Englishwoman wants to come to his church. "I am just cleaning, but you are most welcome." After another minute, his curiosity overcomes his manners: "Are you married to a Serb?"

I light many candles. As we leave he gives Isabella a bottle of holy water and asks if we are coming to the service that evening. When I tell him no, he says: "Then say a prayer for peace at 7 o'clock. If enough people pray, peace will come."

Sunday, April 11
Visit Vesna and Ivica, refugees from the Bosnian War. They are concerned about Russia pointing nuclear missiles at the West: I dismiss it as posturing. "That is your Western mentality," says Ivica. "I promise you, the Russians are bankrupt, unemployed and angry. That is a nation ready for war."

gpm. Ljubisa rings to say they have just heard a massive explosion.

Monday, April 12
We realise what the explosion was: the accidental bombing of a train on a bridge near Leskovac. Ten people are dead.

Tuesday, April 13
I am on the phone to one of Serge's cousins, telling her that Robin Cook says Serb soldiers are systematically raping Kosovo Albanian women. "That's not true," she says firmly. Gently, I say that they did the same thing with Bosnian Muslim women. "I know they did," she says. "But you don't understand. The Serbs hate the Kosovo Albanians; apart from anything else, they think they are dirty. I am telling you, I know the Serb mentality. They would not want even to touch those women."

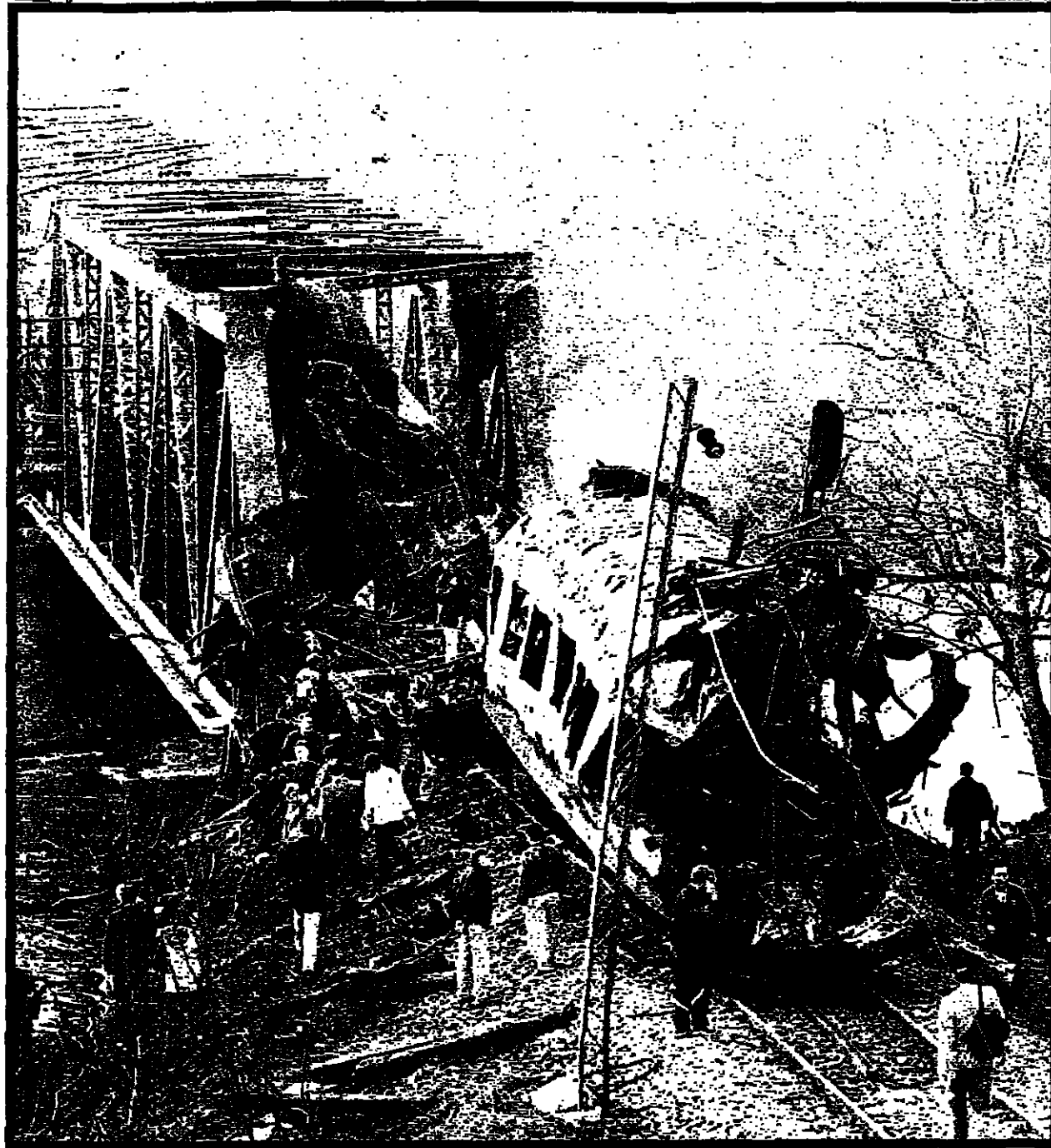
Wednesday, April 14
I read a newspaper article saying there is no independent evidence to support the stories of rape. Who knows what the truth is? What we have learnt is that just as Serge's family cannot believe anything they hear or read over there, so we

cannot believe anything said by Nato or the Ministry of Defence here. It is a cliché that truth is the first casualty of war, but just how much that is so, I am only now beginning to realise.

Later in the day come reports of a refugee convoy being bombed by Nato in Kosovo, killing 64. I watch the 11pm news, listening as Nato says it is investigating, but it seems the attack was by the Serbs, disguised to appear as if by Nato. Instantly, I know it was Nato: if it were not, they would have denied it vehemently and immediately.

As I listen to Tony Blair saying we cannot believe anything said by the Serbs, as it is all propaganda, I find myself saying to the TV screen: and what you are saying is not?

Thursday, April 15
Nato has admitted it did bomb the convoy. It deeply regrets the loss of civilian life. America says the bombardment of Serbia could continue until the summer. I feel utterly weary. When is this madness going to end?



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"I feel I empathise with the refugees even more"

Friday, March 26
The response to my piece in *The Times* takes me completely by surprise. People are universally warm and sympathetic. I feel uplifted and then, when *Times Magazine* columnist John Diamond sends me a fax saying how moved he is, ending with "it must be awful for you" - humbled. You can never, of course, compare suffering: nevertheless, it seems to me that having no tongue and contemplating your death from cancer is a worse form of suffering than ours - albeit just as arbitrary.

In the evening we call Serge's parents. The bombs that fell on Leskovac were dropped by RAF Harriers; they destroyed the barracks, but also (presumably by mistake) Serge's old school. This explains why Vida and Ljubisa's windows shattered: the barracks are two miles away, but the school is only 500 metres or so distant. The news that his school has been bombed - by the British - sends Serge into a state of almost comical bewilderment.

Sunday, March 28
We are spending the weekend with my brother and his family in Sussex. My parents are here too, and we are very deliberately not watching the news. For all our sakes, but especially for Isabella's, we desperately

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A line in the sand which wins respect

A partitioned Kosovo is best, says Sir Malcolm Rifkind

So far, the results of Nato's military intervention in Yugoslavia have been appalling. The bombing has given President Milosevic an unprecedented chance to drive about a million Kosovans into exile. It has, for the first time in years, united the Serbs behind their dictator. It has jeopardised tiny Montenegro's brave attempts to distance itself from Mr Milosevic. And it may be the final nail in the coffin for Russia's liberals and Westernisers.

And yet our instincts tell us there is a powerful moral case for Nato's actions. The bombing has an honourable intent even if the benefits have yet to manifest themselves. We are asked to be patient; to allow the bombing to destroy Serbia's military might until, inevitably, Mr Milosevic comes to his senses.

I would dearly like to believe that this is what will happen but the evidence is very fragile. Of course, Mr Milosevic does not like the damage being done to his military capability, but before long Nato will run out of serious military targets. What then? There is, rightly, no desire to destroy Serbia's economic infrastructure or to bomb its cities. Air power has serious limitations when ground attack is not available and when only military targets are permissible.

Nato was unwise to rule out ground troops so clearly

Mr Milosevic's air defences are being destroyed and he is paying a high military price for his ethnic cleansing. These are real achievements, that have always been deliverable by bombing, but there is as yet no evidence that they will force Mr Milosevic out of Kosovo.

If Nato wanted to enforce a political accord on the ground, it was unwise to have excluded the use of ground forces so unequivocally. Mr Milosevic is an evil man but he is no fool. One cannot rule out ground forces without that message being heard clearly in Belgrade. Mr Milosevic and the Serbs know that if they are prepared to accept punishment from the air, they cannot be forced out of Kosovo.

I am acutely aware that it is always very easy for armchair critics to attack what Nato or the Government are doing. Diplomacy often requires the least bad solution when perfect responses are not available. A policy may not be logical but that does not mean it is necessarily wrong. As Defence, and then Foreign Secretary I faced the same awful choices as George Robertson and Robin Cook. Accordingly, having expressed my grave concerns, let me suggest a way forward from the present debate. Nato has three options.

If Bill Clinton and Tony Blair genuinely believe that bombing alone will force Mr Milosevic to concede all their demands, they must soldier on and time will prove whether they are right or wrong.

If, at least privately, they have lost their confidence in the bombing alone strategy, but they are still immovable on ground forces, they must prepare the public for the Serbs to stay in Kosovo and a major defeat for Nato. Such an endgame would be as much of a disaster for Nato as for the Kosovans.

That leaves the third option of ground forces. Three weeks ago I would have been against their deployment. I still believe that it would result in years of military occupation, a Serb guerrilla campaign and significant Western casualties. But Nato has committed itself too far and too unambiguously to settle for less than a clear defeat of Mr Milosevic. It is not just a matter of Nato pride. Since the start of hostilities, the expulsion of the Kosovans has transformed a local tragedy into a European crisis, worse than anything since 1945. Mr Milosevic has made a Nato climbdown impossible.

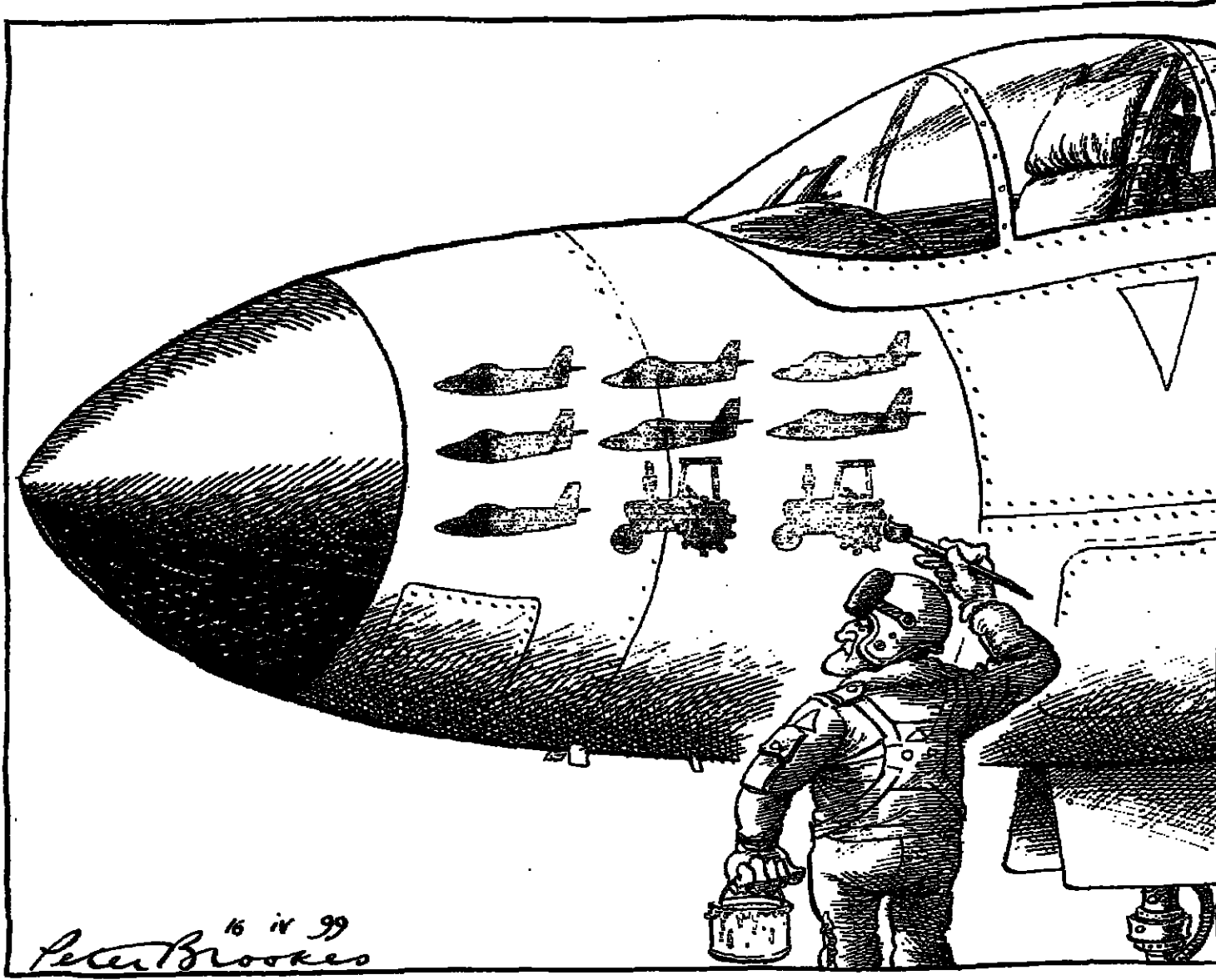
That does not make a Nato ground invasion inevitable, but it does make the credible threat of such an invasion an essential part of a new diplomatic initiative to secure an acceptable peace. A negotiated settlement would, inevitably, involve an element of compromise but that should not be unacceptable to Nato or Western public opinion. The Serbs

do have a legitimate and historic interest in Kosovo, which has been part of their country for most of this century. A significant minority of Kosovo's natural population are Serbs and their rights must be respected. Demands for unconditional surrender from Mr Blair or President Clinton are as unwise as they are unrealistic.

The basis of a negotiated settlement should be a division of Kosovo, with the greater part becoming an independent state for the Kosovo Albanians and a small area, including the sites of greatest historic and cultural importance to the Serbs, being integrated into Yugoslavia.

The negotiations with the Serbs should be conducted by Nato and Russia jointly. Moscow has more influence with Belgrade than anyone else and the Russian public must be shown that the West sees Russia as having an essential role to play. Negotiations in a vacuum will not succeed, however, as Mr Milosevic would have no sufficient incentive to surrender most of Kosovo. Only the threat of a Nato ground invasion would achieve the necessary concessions. Nato must not make such a threat unless it is serious and the Serbs know action would follow if necessary.

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Bloody liberals

The Empire has struck back, with greater force and left-wing sermons

Gladstone's cry echoed across Europe. He told the House of Commons in 1877: "A band of heroes such as the world has rarely seen stand on the rocks of Montenegro. They have sent you their petition, they have prayed for your help and protection... That burden of woe and shame, the greatest that exists on God's earth, is the one that we thought united Europe was about to remove." The Balkan minorities fascinated the Victorians. Defending them against attack challenged their faith and their manhood. Byron had championed Greece and Albania. Tennyson joined Gladstone's call to arms. Of the Balkans, he wrote in a rather pleading sonnet: "They kept their faith, their freedom, on the heights of Chastel, frugal, savage, armed by day and night."

Guardian editorials lack Tennyson's metre, but today's liberal imperialist revival is no less bold. Augusto Pinochet of Chile is seized from the authority of his own people for inquisition by Chile's former ruler, Spain. President Saddam Hussein is being bombed by Iraq's one-time overlord, Britain, like the regular thrashing of a Victorian schoolboy "for his own good". Post-colonial warriors are summoned from Africa to stand trial for "war crimes" in once-imperial European capitals. An air assault on Yugoslavia escalates towards all-out war, amid confusion and horror, to cheers from *The Guardian*, *The Independent* and *The Observer*, and from the massed Labour benches in the House of Commons.

I carry no brief for General Pinochet nor for any of the global fraternity of murderous and repressive rulers. But yesterday's decision that he can be extradited to Spain leaves no doubt that Europeans have resumed a quasi-imperial locus in holding Latin American rulers to account for their actions in office. The British Home Office regard General Pinochet like Garcia de Loyola, the first Governor of Chile in the 16th century. He was considered answerable not to those over whom he ruled but to the Government in Madrid. The list of those vulnerable to this new moral suzerainty may be an unattractive bunch: Gaddafi of Libya, Saddam of Iraq, Karadzic of Bosnia, and Milosevic of Yugoslavia. But this is a club anyone can join. From South Africa to Burma, from Chechnya to Cuba, from Tibet to Congo, even to

Northern Ireland, no sensible limit can now be set on man's right to judge another's inhumanity to man. Just as the civil law has recourse to the criminal when things go awry, so world human rights law has recourse to the State. If Jack Straw's decision on General Pinochet stands, half the embassies in Europe, and all the summit conferences, will be deluged with affidavits, subpoenas, lawyers and arrest warrants. Governments will have to take up positions, for fear of seeming "partial to inhumanity". Those positions seem likely to embrace force. British troops in Bosnia are meant to be arresting suspects on behalf of The Hague War Crimes Tribunal. The mission statement of a British soldier now is not the defence of Britain or her interests abroad, but whatever crisis appeals to the Prime Minister to the duty of Europeans to impose them on a disorderly world. The generations that bred Brooke of Sarawak, Gordon of Khartoum and Milner's Cape Town "kindergarten" would have understood the incarceration in Europe of world rulers who misbehaved towards their peoples. As a form of imperial discipline, judicial inquiry was cheaper than gunboats. But they would also have applauded Mr Blair's Balkan adventure. Gladstone would have been ecstatic. As a former governor of Corfu, he would have cheered Lord Hurd of Westwell's demand for a Kosovan "protectorate", presumably to be swiftly extended from

Bosnia to embrace Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro.

What distinguishes the modern liberals from the Victorians is their reckless recourse to force, especially air power. It is as if, released from the enforced pacifism of the Cold War, they yearn to unleash their pent-up aggression against the sins of the world. The Victorians were at least confused over the relationship of missionary morality to the use of new weaponry. In her study of the psychology of Empire (*Empire and the English Character*), Kathryn Tidrick tells how its administrators were taught that force indicated personal inadequacy. Moral suasion and personal leadership were both the means to domination and its justification. "Not only did they have moral reservations about physical coercion," she writes, "but they believed that they were blessed with attributes of character which enabled them to prevail without it." The legend of General Gordon

Tutsi irregulars cleansed the relevant areas for them. They thus relieved Europe of what would by now be an appalling immersion in the Congo morass. This narrow escape has deflected even the present British Cabinet from trying to police Africa's many other civil wars. White-on-white inhumanity presents a more immediate threat to "values" than black-on-black.

The liberal ideals to which I was educated were a reaction against the old paternalism of Empire. They were rooted in anti-colonialism, in the right of self-determination and in tolerating the wilder political antics of post-imperial states. Such liberalism led many on the British Left to ignore the new dictators in Africa and to oppose Suez, the Bay of Pigs and American aid to Saigon against Hanoi. The essence of this (old) world order was a respect for the right of sovereign nations to chart their own path to heaven or hell. Hence the UN Charter's "hands-off" approach to the internal affairs of member states. Hence, where civil wars erupted, the studiously non-violent ideology of non-government aid and the Red Cross.

This liberalism redefined that of the old Empire as that of guidance by example, co-operation and aid. This was suited to the Cold War and avoided the risk that military intervention might run out of control. Non-intervention was to be overruled only where the sanctity of borders and the stability of regions was blatantly breached, as in the Falklands and Kuwait. The norm was well demonstrated in Ethiopia in 1984-86, a humanitarian disaster resulting from a civil war worse than anything in Yugoslavia. Europe responded with massive, mostly private-sector aid. Hundreds of thousands of lives were saved. The Ethiopian intervention was private, non-violent and productive.

This liberalism appears to be dead. Involvement in overseas conflicts has been nationalised, seized by lawyers, politicians and soldiers marching under the banner of "values not interests". Kosovo is their latest Mecca.

The implications are awesome. The last British Empire was supposedly acquired in a fit of absent-mindedness. The next one is being acquired in a fit of morality. I do not know which is worse.

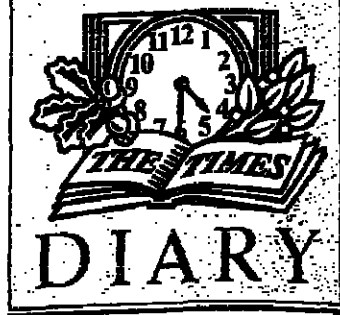
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Simon Jenkins

partly depended on his refusing to carry arms. The fact that Brooke of Sarawak killed a thousand Borneo tribesmen at the battle of Batang Maru, with no British losses, or General Gordon killed 4,000 Chinese at Quinsan, losing just two men, was merely the "collateral damage" of imperialism.

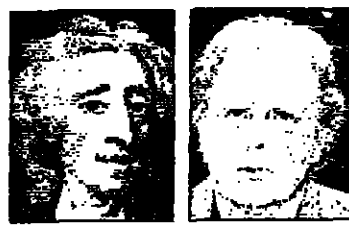
In today's Baghdad and Belgrade, the "moral suasion" of European diplomacy was as ineffective as the deterrence value of aerial bombardment. But rather than admit failure — difficult in a matter of "values not interests" — the British Cabinet felt obliged to administer the retributive punishment of a bombing campaign. It is true that in Kosovo, Nato seems intent on setting up a classic colony, as has the United Nations in Bosnia. During the Rwandan civil war, Africa's Kosovo, various European armies came close to intervening when, at the last minute, the



Artistic booty

BRIAN SEWELL has suffered the curse of new homebuyers and been burgled. But as one of the country's most cherished art critics, the stolen possessions are somewhat grand. Sewell (below right) was divested of lifesize marble busts of John Locke (left) and Emperor Augustus and one in bronze of "an early 20th-century Italian politician whose name I have forgotten".

After living in Kensington for three decades, the critic moved to Wimbledon six weeks ago. His *objets d'art*, which were uninsured, disappeared from his garden last Friday. "I am a victim of my own delusions of grandeur, I am afraid. I had demolished the garden gates to make way for the removal pantechnicons, making it perfectly easy to drive a lorry in and out."



ETON has made it easier for the Prince of Wales to telephone his sons. The school has changed its rules after pressure from parents to allow older pupils to switch their mobiles on outside classes.

■ WHY has one of Tony Blair's few experts on Slobodan Milosevic delayed publication of his insight into the Serb leader? Before taking over as the British Ambassador in Ireland this year, Ivor Roberts had served HMG's interests in Belgrade and became close to the President.

On his return to Britain, the Foreign Office high-flyer, who is involved in the Good Friday talks, spent a year at St Antony's College, Oxford, where he wrote a pamphlet on Milosevic. He wished to turn his words into a book, but now I hear his plans have been delayed.

Could this have something to do with allegations of pro-Serb sympathies made by members of Belgrade's opposition, who called him Roberts the Red? The BBC's *The Ambassador*, which again sees Pauline Collins playing our envoy in Dublin from this weekend, was never so interesting.

ON THE hustings in Leeds, Michael Portillo was asked to predict what gains the local Tories might make in next month's local elections. "I don't want to put a figure on it as I am now a private citizen — and people will ask what do I know about these things?"



■ THE Tory wives' club has been raided by the police. The Andrew Robson Bridge Club, whose patrons include Judith Mellor, Sandra Howard and Diana Rigg (below), had just moved to new premises in West London when local officers dropped by earlier this week to check on reports of an illegal gambling den.

But once they had popped their head into the club, which inspired scenes in *Martha Meet Frank Daniel and Laurence*, the police were quickly assured by Andrew Robson that the tip-off was completely spurious.

U AND non-u bends. At The Spectator party, I noticed that the bathroom door had been defaced. What had begun as "toilet" was replaced with "lavatory", then "loo" and finally "bog". There was less lavatorial humour at Amanda Platell's party to mark her exit from the Editor's seat at the Sunday Express. After being given some flowers, William Hague's new aide asked: "If I throw this over my shoulder, will the person who catches it be the next one to get the sack?"

■ AT THE unveiling of his Internet booking service, Bob Geldof, the former Boomtown Rat, welcomed his guests in his unique style: "It shows how sad you all are coming to the launch of something as boring as an Internet site."

EDWARD WELSH

'From Agincourt to Alamein, the battle is won by the infantry. The cavalry are merely an ornament'

Bombs cannot win a war on their own. They never have and they never will. There is a persuasive argument that Bomber Command's "strategic" bombing lengthened the last war by driving German resistance into back-to-the-rubble desperation. "Immaculate coercion" is always a fantasy strategy. War means blood and damage. And in the end, the PBI (Poor Bloody Infantry) are sent in to hold the ground that the bombers have rendered untenable.

Aircraft and rockets have replaced the cavalry as the pampers of the battlefield. Cavalrymen used to wear the impossibly tight cherry-picking trousers and absurd plumes and silver spurs with flowerpots on their heads. The girls were supposed to fancy them, though the cavalry traditionally fancied nobody but themselves and their own sex. Today pilots wear the

space-age uniforms and give the celebrity interviews. Small boys used to fantasise about leading the charge. Today video games persuade them that it is possible to zap hostiles without getting hurt themselves.

Over Easter the little boys were playing something called Killak the Blood. In your Stealth bomber pilot's power suit you have to explore seven underground mazes defended by hostile robots. "There are seven JS 107-compatible weapons, although you begin the mission with only one. Four of these use special ammunition. The others run off your suit's power supply. Hence they cease to function when your suit is down to auxiliary power." Little boys are brilliant at zapping and zooming controls. I have enough trouble mastering the peaceful computer that inspires only bloody thoughts, in order to write this. It

is just as well that I have no ambitions to play computer games. The robots would win.

There was an interesting paper at the Classical Association's meeting in Liverpool about why Ancient Athenians wanted to sign on for the cavalry. I should have guessed for social prestige or in order to belong to the Cavalry Club. Not so. It was simpler than that. To sit on a horse reduced one's chance of being killed on the battlefield by a factor of at least ten. Of course, it increased one's chance of being kicked, bucked, bitten or farted to death. But it was still the strategy for immaculate coercion.

The cavalry have always seen themselves as the flower of the

Philip Howard



battlefield. But they have seldom won a battle. The cavalry actions in which the British take most pride were catastrophic defeats such as the charges of the Light and Heavy Brigades at Balaclava. The Scots Greys got their picture painted for their charge at Waterloo. But it was the Jocks they gave a lift to on their stirrups who had to do the dirty work when the charging had to stop.

It was a cavalry officer with the brains of his mount who declared: "It must be accepted that the rifle, effective as it is, cannot replace the effect produced by the speed of the horse, the magnetism of the charge, and the terror of cold steel." He was Field Marshal Earl Haig. And a fat lot

of good his theory from behind the lines did for the footmen with trench feet at the Somme.

Boadicea had a temporary success with her horses. Ancient British ladies and gentlemen used chariots to travel to battle and manoeuvre on the battlefield. But they dismounted before they fought. Have you ever tried to aim a spear from a chariot being driven over rough ground? The English in particular have always taken a pride in their cavalry. Or at any rate, the horse-owning squishy classes have. The saddle was the seat of prestige on the hunting field and supposed to be a symbol of the best of British.

But they never delivered on the battlefield. King Robert I of Scotland said of the English Army trotting into sight over the peat bogs: "They glory in their warhorses and equipment. For

us the name of the Lord must be our hope of victory in battle." That was cited in John of Fordun's *Chronica Gentis Scotorum*, after Bannockburn. From Agincourt to Alamein, the battle is won by infantry. The cavalry are merely an ornament.

Some English battles may have been influenced by men on horses. But they were mostly in the Civil War, when the bone heads bounced on both sides. Great cavalry commanders, from Genghis Khan to Attila the Hun, are not inspiring examples. Pizarro and his Conquistadores conquered the Incas with cavalry, they say. Bernal Diaz del Castillo in *The Conquest of New Spain*, 1568, explained: "The Indians thought the horse and rider were one creature, for they had never seen them before." If you are serious about war, forget the horsemen and the pilots. Send for the Black Watch.



DEFENDER OF BRITAIN

The Chancellor leads the fight for the Union

The writing is, allegedly, on Hadrian's Wall. The Union, which has served its constituent nations so well, is presumed to be unravelling. Scottish nationalism has already secured a devolved parliament and will shortly establish a powerful bridgehead within it. English nationalism is finding an increasingly articulate voice. The distance of Northern Irish politics from Westminster is being confirmed by the development of a new form of devolution. And the utility of all existing nation states is called into question by the new supranational order.

Yet those who forecast the end of Britain are guilty of letting separatist wishes be father to muddled thoughts. The case for Britishness is stronger than many allow, both in logic and the sentiments of all these islands' inhabitants. But no case is so strong that it does not need advocates, and no sentiment so durable that it does not require refurbishment. That is why Gordon Brown's speech on the New Britain yesterday was both welcome and wise.

The Chancellor is both chief executive and chief ideologist of this Government. He appreciates that the nation state has to adjust to the forces we have come to call "globalisation", international finance, the speed of technology, and the power of supranational institutions such as Nato, the WTO and the EU. The Chancellor, however, recognises that it has been through engagement with change, and involvement in the world, that the British genius has been defined. A rich trading past, a leading role in maintaining stability abroad and a national life increasingly enriched by different cultural influences have helped shape the character we recognise as British.

In that context the Chancellor is both historically and politically right to argue that the "the progressive response to global change is not to look inwards, to cut

ourselves off, or in the face of profound change to retreat into factionalism". Mr Brown prefers to empower the citizen in a world which seems to rob him of roots by creating new rights and institutions in a modern British settlement. There may be concerns that some of his constitutional answers are still half-formed, but the sincerity of Mr Brown's attempts to reinforce British traditions is not in doubt.

Mr Brown's progressive response is also potentially popular. The Chancellor quoted polling evidence to suggest that Scots, Welsh and English all broadly agree that the British derive benefits from working together. It is a pity that the poll the Chancellor quoted did not give the British people of Ulster the chance to assent, as they would have, to that sentiment. But the popularity of Britain is an eloquent reproof to those who wish to accelerate separatist trends. The Chancellor could not admit that there are those in his own party who have encouraged separatism, partly by caricaturing Tory Unionism and occasionally by sharing a platform with nationalists. But the force of his new unionism is more than sufficient amends for brothers who have not kept the solidarity principle.

The Chancellor, as a godfather to devolution, recognises that it has provided a space which separatists will seek to exploit. It also creates a temptation for the unscrupulous to stoke perceived English resentments. Those who encourage the English to "take back" the money, or political representation, which Scotland and Wales enjoy risk the loss of something far more precious than subventions. England loses something of its character, the sense of fair play which the Chancellor identifies at its core, if it is driven in on itself. England has a better friend in Mr Brown than those who wrap themselves in the flag of St George. The Union now has a defender equal to the fight.

SWORD AND PEN

Truth is the only way to grapple with Serb falsehoods

The more Nato says about Wednesday's bombing of Kosovan Albanian refugees, the more confusing the picture becomes. No two accounts of this incident tally; nothing seems certain except that many civilians are dead, that a Nato error almost certainly caused some, at least, of these deaths and that the Pentagon's inordinately clumsy handling of the news when it first broke must have left Slobodan Milosevic weeping tears of joy.

Kenneth Bacon, the Pentagon spokesman, may have genuinely believed that Nato aircraft were not responsible. But he could not have been certain. The pilots in action over Kosovo that day had not yet been debriefed. He did the credibility of the Alliance nothing but harm by alleging that Serb forces had done the killing themselves to embarrass Nato. Since he had no evidence of that either, this disastrously gave the impression that Nato might stoop to the black propaganda at which the Milosevic regime excels. When horrendous photographs of mangled corpses were being flashed round the world, the only sensible response would have been to promise a speedy Nato investigation.

Some of those facts remain elusive. Yesterday Jamie Shea, the spokesman for Nato's Secretary-General, admitted, with "deep regrets", that a Nato aircraft had hit a civilian vehicle on the road between the Kosovan towns of Prizren and Djakovica, in a convoy which "may" also have contained Serb police or military vehicles. But Nato's military spokesman, General Giuseppe Marani, then said that the strike was against a three-vehicle convoy of green vehicles, not the red tractors shown to have been hit, and that it was on a different road, northwest of Djakovica. Other Nato sources suggested that there were indeed two convoys, on the same road, and that Nato had hit the wrong one. This all contrasts uncomfortably with the speed with which Nato appears able to provide full reports, with cockpit videos, on its

successful missions. Belgrade's version does not tally, either, with what is known. Its assertion that these were civilians being escorted "home" is hardly compatible with statements by survivors, or with detailed reports from Nato pilots that the whole area was studded with villages that had just been set ablaze.

But this makes it all the more imperative that Nato swiftly comes up with a coherent account. Otherwise, this single tragic incident could impair trust in the veracity of its information. That would be collateral damage of huge consequence.

Democracies at war must be seen to treasure truth. That must include a rigorous respect among politicians for the independence of the media, even when its reporting is not to their liking. In Belgrade, Western reporters are to some extent working within a hostile propaganda machine. They are operating under the close surveillance of a regime that, with the assassination of the stalwart Serb editor Slavko Curuvija, has just given fresh proof of its readiness to kill Serbia's own messengers. When Serb civilians are interviewed for television, they know that their words are monitored by the secret police; Serb bomb reports will be chosen for their propaganda value. All film from Belgrade therefore requires the health warning that the broadcasters give it.

That in no way excuses Downing Street's whispering campaign against the BBC's John Simpson and other British journalists reporting from Serbia, whom it accuses of parroting Serb propaganda. What they report is a matter for them and their editors, who may well judge that, however untrue, it is right to record what the Milosevic regime is saying. Politicians never appear weaker than when they betray nervousness about enemy propaganda. Snide attempts at news management can look like covert censorship. On this front, and this alone, the Prime Minister should order an immediate ceasefire.

PRONE MINISTER'S QUESTIONS

The Deputy Prime Minister needs to sharpen up his act

John Prescott's matinee performance descended into black comedy on Wednesday afternoon. The Deputy Prime Minister's attempt at answering Prime Minister's Questions left many wondering how he manages to keep the role of Tony Blair's understudy. Mr Prescott's parliamentary crime goes beyond his customary cruelty to syntax. Prime Minister's Question Time is the legislature's opportunity to hold the executive to account. Mr Prescott's debacle was not merely contemptuous of that process, but exposed a startling ignorance at the heart of Government.

In the Commons cockpit, calling General Mladic "Motherditch" would be a forgivable offence in peacetime, let alone war. Yet the MP for Hull East did not find only words difficult. A question about the European withholding tax baffled the Deputy Prime Minister, whose answer referred to the poll tax. A query about class sizes provoked a spurious response. When challenged by the interrogator, Mr Prescott petulantly snapped: "That is the answer he is going to get." As the agony neared its end, Mr Prescott observed that "the voice" of the Commons should be "good lan-

guage, sane language and common sense". Sadly, he displayed none of them. Previous performers might pity Mr Prescott's plight. Every past Prime Minister has admitted nervousness before this gruelling parliamentary inquisition, some even needing a stiff drink. Yet Prime Ministers — and Mr Prescott — are briefed by a platoon of advisers, who spend hours preparing answers to awkward questions. Aided by these crack civil servants, Richard Crossman wrote how the man who "is running the executive has to be there at the dispatch box, and has to fight the contender for power". On Wednesday Mr Prescott, an ex-boxer, fought himself.

Little evidence now remains of the Deputy Prime Minister's rout. The *Hansard* reporters deciphered his garbled words and recorded his humiliation as the Speaker calling "Order". Benjamin Disraeli survived a similar ordeal during his maiden speech, ending it with the flourish "I will sit down now, but the time will come when you will hear me". The next time Mr Prescott stands up at the dispatch box, deputising for the Prime Minister, he must be sure he is ready to be heard.

The 'dangerous' policies of SNP

From Mr Drummond Hunter

Sir, It is time to call a halt to the Scottish National Party's blatant misuse of the phrase "independence for Scotland".

Scotland has never been anything other than an independent nation. Over the last 300 years it has chosen to work in partnership with England. Shared sovereignty of this kind — and, perhaps, in particular, conditionally shared sovereignty, is something that the nationalists cannot conceive of. For them independence means a suicidal separatism.

It is crucially important that the Scottish electorate is fully aware that the current election is a battle between an independent Scotland which recognises that building bridges is the way forward and which aims to strengthen and renew its partnership with England (a partnership which has given the world both law and democracy) and an independent Scotland which sees its future in separatism, ie, in working with (or against) England across an international frontier.

It was always a monumental gaffe to effect the current constitutional revolution under the rubric of "devolution". As Earl Russell pointed out in *The Scotsman* (July 19, 1996), devolution amounts to the "annexation of Scotland by England", and is, accordingly, an unforgivable constitutional sin.

What is now at stake in the real world, inevitably and perfectly properly, is the renegotiation of the 1707 Act of Union.

Yours etc,
DRUMMOND HUNTER,
17 Warrington Crescent,
Edinburgh EH3 5LB,
April 13.

From Mr James W. Finlay

Sir, It is the perversion of politics that while 75 per cent of the UK citizens living in Scotland do not wish to see the break-up of the UK, their membership of three different Unionist parties, competing for their votes, could result in victory for the SNP — and all its dangerous policies.

Political parties are composed of politically ambitious members who could be reluctant to see their votes being invested long-term in tactical voting. It could be that the national overall party support would not be distorted much if the strongest challenger to the SNP received the overwhelming support of the anti-nationalists.

But unless the overriding objective of the voter is to destroy the nationalists, once and for all, we could dreamwalk into disaster. The patriotic voter must put country before party with the sole objective of saving the Union by tactical voting.

Yours faithfully,
JAMES W. FINLAY,
Rainton, Gatehouse of Fleet,
Castle Douglas DG7 2DR,
April 13.

Refugee tragedy

From Brigadier Johnny Rickett

Sir, Having experienced a "Blue on Blue" in the Falklands war, the parlance for bombing or shooting your own side, it saddens me dreadfully that Nato HQ has now to spend countless hours investigating "a mistake" (reports, April 15).

Politicians and everyone else must realise that war is a horrible thing, and once unleashed, mistakes inevitably happen. In war nothing is certain and the lesson for those of faint hearts is to stand firm through unpleasantness as redemption will follow.

Yours sincerely,
JOHNNY RICKETT,
Union Jack Club,
Sandell Street, SE1 8UJ,
April 15.

From Mr N. F. Maion

Sir, Your front-page photograph this morning of an injured woman lying amid rubble goes beyond the boundaries of photographic journalism.

We honour the dignity of victims of road accidents and crime. Why should the victims of war be any different?

Yours faithfully,
N. F. MAION,
251 Ffild Road, Oxford OX4 1SJ,
April 15.

From Mr David Green

Sir, Nations declare war. Alliances mostly exist for mutual defence.

Humanitarian interests apart, Nato is seeking to protect itself against invasion by the best part of a million refugees forcibly and deliberately driven from their homeland by their own Government. Its object is to see those refugees safely back in that homeland.

Anack is sometimes the best means of defence. Against Milosevic's Serbia it is now the only available means. But those such as the Reverend Giles Hunt (letter, April 15) who seek legal niceties in what are only the latest aspects of this tragedy should first remember how it started.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID GREEN,
Rhyd yr Harding, Castle Morris,
Nr Haverfordwest SA62 5EJ,
April 15.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Legal rights for the mentally ill

From the Chief Executive of the National Schizophrenia Fellowship and others

Sir, The Government has ordered a review of the Mental Health Act. In their public statements, ministers have emphasised the concern that a small number of people with severe mental illness may stop taking medication and suffer relapse. They have proposed powers of compulsory treatment in the community as a response.

Those who use mental health services, their families, and professionals in the front line all know that this is not the main problem with the current system.

The real failing is that too often people cannot get decent care and treatment, nor help in a crisis, which could prevent the need for compulsion in the first place. For too many people the experience of severe mental illness is to seek help with increasing desperation, to be turned away time and again, until finally a crisis is reached which demands compulsory intervention, often in traumatic circumstances, and frequently with police involvement.

It is a scandal that such a situation has been tolerated for so long.

Despite several years when mental health has been top of the stated priorities of the NHS, and after a series of action plans by successive governments, these problems remain.

The solution is to place the power in the hands of those who need it most, by giving people with severe mental illness and their carers legal rights to good standards of care and treatment.

The opportunity to influence mental health law comes up only once in a generation. We call for that opportunity to be taken. Rights to care and treatment should form the foundations of the new Act.

Yours sincerely,
CLIFF PRIOR,
Chief Executive,
National Schizophrenia Fellowship,
KAREN CAMPBELL,
Chief Executive,
Manic Depression Fellowship,
GILL HITCHON,
Chief Executive, MACA (Mental Alier Care Association),
National Schizophrenia Fellowship,
30 Tabernacle Street, EC2A 4DD,
April 13.

Pinochet extradition

From the Director of Public Prosecutions

Sir, Extradition arrangements between the Kingdom of Spain and the United Kingdom are governed by the European Convention on Extradition.

Spain is represented by the Crown Prosecution Service in extradition proceedings in our domestic courts, as are other countries, in accordance with longstanding reciprocal arrangements. Lord Justice Glidewell described the nature of the CPS's role in 1994 when he emphasised that, in relation to extradition proceedings, the Director of Public Prosecutions "is not to be regarded as the prosecutor, but as a lawyer acting on behalf of a foreign client".

The reference in your leading article today, "Straw's list", to "Mr Straw's own Crown Prosecution Service" is fundamentally misleading, as

is the suggestion that the role of the CPS demonstrates that "the British Government is... actually pursuing the General on its own account".

Both I and the CPS are entirely independent of the Home Secretary. The role of the CPS in this matter has been throughout to act on behalf of Spain. This has inevitably included advising Spain about the implications of the House of Lords ruling on March 24, 1999.

A number of parties made representations to the Home Secretary. The additional material submitted for his consideration by the CPS was submitted on behalf of Spain. That is the only proper basis on which the material could have been submitted by the CPS.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID CALVERT-SMITH,
Director of Public Prosecutions,
Crown Prosecution Service,
50 Ludgate Hill, EC4M 7EX,
April 15.

Children and alcohol

From the Director of The Portman Group

Sir, There will be an excellent opportunity in the House of Commons on Friday, April 16 for some joined-up thinking to be translated into legislation.

I hope that Members of Parliament will break with tradition and delay their weekend return to their constituencies so that they can support the second reading of Christine McCafferty's Licensing (Young Persons) Bill.

The Bill is designed to curb undesirable access to alcohol by children by closing a legal loophole so that employees in licensed premises — not just the licensee — would break the law if they served alcohol to children: creating a new offence of "proxy purchase", where someone over 18 buys

alcohol on behalf of a child (this is already an offence in Scotland); and permitting the police and trading standards officers to conduct "test purchases" where retailers are suspected of selling alcohol to children.

Unusually for a Private Member's Bill at this early stage, this Bill has attracted backing from Members on all sides of the House, as well as a formidable consensus of support from the police, local authorities, magistrates and the drinks industry.

I hope there will be enough MPs who realise that, on this Friday at least, staying in the House will be the best way they can represent their constituents' interest.

Yours faithfully,
JEAN COUSSINS,
Director,
The Portman Group,
2d Wimpole Street, W1M 7AA,
April 14.

Millennium avarice

From Mr Barry Hyman

Sir, I see that we are to be bugged by millennium avarice as much as by computer failure (report, "Computer staff to top new year pay bonanza", April 12).

It seems that New Year's Eve 1999 — not, as a few of us know, the last day of the millennium — is to be marked by people demanding huge sums of money to work instead of getting plastered.

Is there no organisation taking the names of those who will jump at the chance of avoiding all mention of the pseudo-celebration by either volunteering to help in hospitals and other needy institutions or by finding a country retreat pledged to offer no mention of the event?

Falling that, I shall have to retire to a locked, barred and soundproofed room for relief from the inevitable misplaced hype and hysteria to which the media — no doubt yourselves included — will submit us.

Yours faithfully,
BARRY HYMAN,
4 Priory View, Bushey Heath,
Hertfordshire WD2 3QZ,
barye@booshie.demon.co.uk,
April 12.

A proper pride

From Mr Norman Jones

Sir, I would never have dreamt of questioning my late father-in-law's patriotism (letters, April 10 and 15); he always marked St George's Day by planting out his tomatoes.

Yours sincerely,
NORMAN JONES,
The Ridgeway,
Ibstone Road, Stokenchurch,
Buckinghamshire HP14 2XR,
April 11.

Business letters, page 31

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

Price of shopping at the superstores

From Mr Andrew Sadler

Sir, Your headline today asks: "Are superstores cheating you?"

In the 12 months of 1998 my family of two adults and two children spent £4,330.13 on supermarket items, of which £3,252.66 was at one of the "big four".

Following a television programme last autumn on pricing, I started to buy potatoes from a farm shop and switched my main expenditure to a discount store (Lidl). We still have to go to one of the major chains for some items.

For the three months January to March our savings have been 34 per cent, 45 per cent and 53 per cent respectively. From this, our projected saving for the year 1999 is £1,909.

Yours sincerely,
ANDREW SADLER,
21 Chestnut Street, Lincoln LN1 3HB,
asadler@globalnet.co.uk,
April 9.

Making a packet

From Mrs Eira Harris

Sir, I see that the country's richest businessman makes packaging for the food industry ("Britain's top 10", April 12). Am I right to believe that many of the country's poorest businessmen produce the food that's placed inside this packaging?

Yours faithfully,
EIRA HARRIS,
Ffosyffer Farm, Abercych,
Boncath, Pembrokeshire SA37 0EU,
April 14.

Business and the Bard

From Miss C. J. V. Picton Phillipps

Sir, It is true that Shakespeare can provide lessons on how to survive in business (Alan Hamilton's report, April 7).

As a client of a small firm of personal investment managers based in East Lothian, I regularly receive articles written by Victor Wood, one of its directors, on a variety of subjects not necessarily connected with investment. Each article is headed by a quotation from the works of Shakespeare.

I am told that the quotation is chosen (with the aid of a concordance) after the completion of the manuscript, and that in the ten years over which the articles have been written a brief period of research has never failed to yield a passage which hits the nail on the head precisely.

"It is like a barber's chair that fits all buttocks" (*All's Well that Ends Well*, II, ii).

I am, etc.
C. J. V. PICTON PHILLIPPS,
6 Nicolson Square,
Edinburgh EH8 9BH,
April 8.

Marbles in the gutter

From Mr John R. Hart

Sir, I was delighted to see the term "lor" used for a marble (letters, March 27 and April 8) as I had not come across it since my boyhood in British India. We also called them "alleys".

Our style was to crouch with thumb on the ground and the marble loaded against the tip of the middle finger. This finger was then bent back, like a tiny manganol, and the tor sent twanging away at its target.

Games varied. One involved a circle with marbles in it. Each had tried in turn to knock them out to win. If his tor stayed in the circle he forfeited it. Another game involved a hole, or dub, usually set against a slope, so that mis-thots might roll back in and be lost. Winning meant knocking in the other lads' marbles (or, sometimes, walnuts).

Girls never played.

I am, Sir, in reminiscent mood. Very truly yours,
JOHN HART,
11 Mountview, Mill Hill, NW7 3HT,
April 9.

From Mr J. M. Gelshtorpe

Sir, Mr Edward Wilcock (letter, March 27) is right about the need for an uneven surface to play marbles.

Ten years ago, at Leigham Junior School in north Plymouth, the significantly named "pitties" was played constantly, despite darkness and the caretaker.

When the playground was resurfaced the game vanished abruptly and finally.

Yours faithfully,
J. M. GELSTHORPE,
6 Willowby Park,
Yelverton, Devon PL20 6AN,
April 11.

High romance

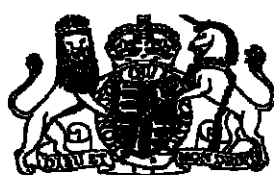
From Mr Frederick O. Marsh

Sir, Who says that romance and chivalry are dead?

I have just heard of a pilot who proposed to his future wife in a glider, over the top of a loop. He lowered a wing, so that he was down on one knee.

Yours sincerely,
FREDERICK O. MARSH
(Vice-President,
The Royal Aero Club),
36 Edwards Square, W8 6HH,
April 14.

Yours sincerely,
GEORGE BARBOUR,
55 Onslow Square, SW7 3LR,
April 14.



COURT CIRCULAR

WINDSOR CASTLE
April 15: The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh gave a Dinner Party this evening.

The following were invited: His Excellency the Ambassador of Spain and Señora de Am, His Excellency the High Commissioner for the Republic of Cameroon and Madame Libick, the Reverend Dr and Mrs Ivor Jones, the Baroness Blackstone, Sir Timothy and the Lady Mary Colman, Sir Richard Bishop, Mr Trevor Nunn and Miss Imogen Stubbs, Mr and Mrs William Packer, Mr Stewart Purvis, the Reverend Canon and Mrs John Ovenden and Lieutenant-Colonel and Mrs Jonathan Bourne-May.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
April 15: The Prince of Wales today visited Great Manchester where he was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Greater Manchester (Colonel John Timmins).

His Royal Highness, as Patron of the Manchester Grammar School Foundation Bursary Appeal, this morning visited the school at Folkestone, where he met staff and students. The Prince of Wales this afternoon visited Duke High School, Moss Side, where he met staff and pupils and, as President of Business in the Community, attended a discussion on business mentoring in schools.

His Royal Highness, Patron, Castle Howard Arboretum Trust, afterwards visited Castle Howard and met present and future supporters of the Trust.

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Humphrey Ocean, a portrait painter, using an eye-tracker at *The Painter's Eye* exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery in London. The exhibition, which opens today, shows how an artist looks at a model, how his hands reproduce what he sees and how he looks at the finished result. It uses models, paintings and equipment such as the eye-tracker, a special camera which reveals the precise focus of an artist's gaze.

Dinners

All England Club
The Duke of Kent, President of the All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club, was in the chair at the annual dinner held last night at the Institute of Directors, Mr John Curry, chairman, Mr Jimmy Hill and Mr Sebastian Cox also spoke.

The Institution of Civil Engineers
Sir Alastair Morton, chairman of the shadow Strategic Rail Authority, was the principal guest and speaker at the annual dinner of the Institution of Civil Engineers held last night at Grosvenor House. Mr Roger Sainsbury, president, was in the chair and Mr Robbie Glen also spoke. The High Commissioner for Bangladesh, and the High Commissioner for Pakistan were among the guests.

The Japan Society
The Annual Dinner of the Japan Society was held at the Four Seasons Hotel, Park Lane, on April 15. Sir Edward Heath, KG, MBE, MP, was the Guest of Honour. During the evening, the 1999 Japan Society Awards were presented to Lady Kinki, Secretary of the Dornington Grove Society for Anglo-Japanese Cultural Exchange, and Mr James Howat, former Chairman of Morrison Bowmer, in recognition of their outstanding work in the field of Anglo-Japanese relations.

Gardeners' Company
Mr N.A. Chalmers, Master of the Gardeners' Company, assisted by Canon P. Delaney and Mr Vivian Robinson, QC, wardens, presided at the spring court dinner held last night at Plasener's Hall. During the dinner the Master presented the Gardeners' Company prizes to students from the Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew, Chapel Manor College, the Royal Horticultural Society, Wisley and Wye College. Mr Adrian Barnes, Remembrancer of the City of London, and Mr Edward Wright also spoke.

Chester Business Club
Sir Ludovic Kennedy was the guest of honour and principal speaker at a dinner of the Chester Business Club held last night at the Mollington Banquet Hotel, Chester. Mr Martin Seed, club chairman, presided. Mrs Sarah Samuels and Mr Bob Clough-Parker, club secretary, also spoke.

Durham Castle Society
Former students of University College, Durham attended the 33rd annual reunion dinner of the Durham Castle Society in the Great Hall of Durham Castle on Saturday, March 27, 1999. The new Master, Professor Maurice E. Tucker, presided, and the toast to the college was proposed by Mr Alex J. Nelson.

School news

Dean Close School
Trinity Term has begun. Bradley Means is Captain of Cricket and Katrina Blomfield is Captain of Girls' Tennis. The U14 Boys XI will play in the RAF Careers Hockey Youth Cup National Final at Milton Keynes on April 25. At Prize-Giving on May 29 the Guest of Honour will be Mr Frank Field, MP, and Dr John Leanne will present at the Service of Commemoration of Benefactors. In the Bacon Theatre *Armadillo* will be presented on May 21 and 28 and *Music for a Summer Evening* on June 12. Term ends on July 2, with the *OD Gaudy* on July 3.

Queenswood School
The Summer Term at Queenswood begins on Sunday, April 18, with Beth Atterwill as Head Girl and Susannah Groves as Deputy Head Girl. Confirmation will be on Saturday, May 8, at 10.45am. The service being conducted by the Bishop of St Albans and the Rev G. Rogers. The Queenswood Ball will be held on Saturday, June 26. Further details are available from the school. Speech Day is on Saturday, July 3. Full details of this term's music programme can be obtained from the Music Department.

Elmslie Girls' School
The opening of the Oakdene Science and Rainbow ICT Suites by Sir David Harrison, CBE, FEng, Master of Selwyn College, Cambridge, will take place today. Events this term include: the Old Girls' Reunion Lunch, May 8, and a Service to mark the 40th Anniversary of the Chapel's consecration with the Bishop of Knaresborough, the Right Rev Frank Weston, May 28. (Details from School 01533 76377).

The Godolphin and Latymer School
School members of the school community - parents, staff and girls are invited to join the newly formed Friends of G&L. There will be a Launch Party in June. Please contact the school on 0181 741 9336.

Isleworth Place School
Isleworth Place School is holding a celebration lunch today to receive the 'Investor in People' Award from Mr Ian Parkes, Chairman of AZTEC. The summer term starts on Monday, April 19. Charlie Barr and Sarah Edwards are Heads of School. Speech Day will be on Thursday, July 1, 1999, when the Guest Speaker will be Mr R.M.J. Lyle, UK Permanent Representative to the Office of the United Nations in Geneva.

Church news

The Rev Stefanie Hodges, Assistant Curate, Croydon Christ Church (Southwark), to be Assistant Curate, Sutton St Nicholas (same diocese). The Rev David Morphy, Deputy Headmaster, Stourport High School, and Honorary Curate, 1833-34, to be Curate, Worcester (Worcester); to be Diocesan Director of Education (same diocese). The Rev Kenneth Reeves, permission to officiate (Norwich); to be part-time Priest-in-Charge, Lakenham St Mark w Trovise (same diocese).

The Rev John Richardson, Chaplain, University of East London and Honorary Curate, Stratford St John and Christ Church, Stratford, to be Priest-in-Charge, Lakenham St Mark w Trovise (same diocese). The Rev Alan Middleton, Vicar, Upper Norwood All Saints (Southwark), to be Team Rector, Warrington, continuing as Croydon Archdeacon Ecumenical Adviser (same diocese).

The Rev David Moore, Vicar, Ham St Andrew (Southwark), to be Priest-in-Charge, Rothbury (Newcastle). The Rev Margaret Moore, Team Vicar, Great Baddow with special responsibility for St Paul (Chelmsford), to be Priest-in-Charge, Woodham Mortimer w Hazelrigg and Woodham Wattle (same diocese).

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Receptions

The League of St Bartholomew's Nurses
The Duchess of Gloucester attended a reception held yesterday in the Great Hall at the Royal Hospital of St Bartholomew after a Service of Thanksgiving in the Priory Church of St Bartholomew, the Great, West Smithfield, to celebrate the centenary of the foundation of The League of St Bartholomew's Nurses. The Archbishop of Canterbury preached the sermon. Earlier a luncheon was held in the Old Library, Guildhall.

Lord Wise
Lord Wise entertained the Welsh Trust for the Prevention of Abuse at a reception held last night at the House of Lords. The Lord-Lieutenant of Greater London was among the guests.

Meeting

France-British Society
Sir Michael Jay, HM Ambassador to France, was the guest speaker at the annual meeting of the Franco-British Society held yesterday at the RAF Club, Lord Strabolgi, vice-president, was in the chair. Sir John Fretwell, chairman, also spoke.

Luncheons

HM Government
The Secretary of State for Defence was the host at a luncheon given by Her Majesty's Government yesterday at Lancaster House in honour of Dr János Szabó, Hungarian Minister for Defence.

Lord Mayor of Westminster
The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayor of London were the guests of honour at a luncheon given by the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Westminster at City Hall yesterday. Among others present were: Mr Sherill and Mrs Brian Harris, Air Vice-Marshal William J. O'Brien, Colonel A. E. Tucker, Major George Stuck, the Lord Mayor of Westminster Delegation and the Chief Executive of the International Underwriting Association of London.

Society of Apothecaries
Professor Salvador Moncada, FRS, has been presented with the Society of Apothecaries of London Galen Medal.

Latest wills

Mr Edgar Hugh Withers, of Old Kest, Truro, Cornwall, left estate valued at £2,961,047 net. Mr Arthur Reginald Cox Marler, of Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire, left estate valued at £1,025,381 net. Mr Francis Worsfold McClelland, of Highgate, Newbury, left estate valued at £1,598,667 net. Betty Mudd, of Quisborough, Cleveland, left estate valued at £1,574,996 net.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr C.J. Blackburn and Miss S.J. Bailey
The engagement is announced between Charlie, only son of the late Mr Keith Blackburn, of Mrs Elizabeth Blackburn, of Hurley, Berkshire, and Serena, daughter of Captain and Mrs David Bailey, of East Meon, Hampshire.

Captain M.A. Claxton and Miss L.A. Meehan
The engagement is announced between Matthew, son of Mr and Mrs Alan Claxton, of Farnham, Kent, and Lorraine, only daughter of Mr and Mrs John Meehan, of Milford, Derbyshire.

Mr P. Cooper and Miss E.A. Mead
The engagement is announced between Peter, son of Mr and Mrs Stanley Cooper, of Gravesend, Kent, and Liz, youngest daughter of Dr and Mrs Bernard Mead, of Corle Mullen, Dorset.

Mr J. Cunningham and Miss R.P. Lethbridge
The engagement is announced between Jeremy, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Alan Cunningham, of Canterbury, Surrey, and Rachel, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs Brian Lethbridge, of Papamoa, New Zealand.

Mr O.C. Hudson and Miss C.J. Lindley
The engagement is announced between Oliver, younger son of Mr Richard Hudson, of Beverley, East Yorkshire, and Mrs Judi Lurie, of Aulby, East Yorkshire, and Caroline, daughter of Mr and Mrs Duncan Lindley, of Knaresborough, North Yorkshire.

Mr N.G. Lloyd and Miss M.E.C. Sowden
The engagement is announced between Nicholas, son of Mr and Mrs G.R. Lloyd, of Stoke by Clare, Suffolk, and Michelle, daughter of Mr and Mrs M.A. Sowden, of Epsom, Surrey.

Mr W.J. Micklethwait and Miss A.E. Bernard
The engagement is announced between William, younger son of Mr and Mrs Richard Micklethwait, of Preston Hall, Rutland, and Alicia, elder daughter of Sheila Lady Bernard, of London SW3, and Sir Dallas Bernard, Bt, of 106 Cheyne Walk, London SW10.

Mr T.D.P.C. Miers and Miss D.E. Gray
The engagement is announced between Tom, younger son of Sir David and Lady Miers, of London, and Diana, eldest daughter of Mrs Jacs Crawford and stepdaughter of Mr George Crawford, of Gifford, East Lothian.

Mr J.R. Milne and Miss C.A. Stanley
The engagement is announced between Jeremy, son of Mr and Mrs Kenneth Milne, of Blandford, Dorset, and Louisa, daughter of Mr Peter Stanley, of Cundall, Yorkshire, and Gunilla Gråm Douglas, of 31 The Little Boltons, London.

Mr S.J.W. Perrett and Miss V.L. Morris
The engagement is announced between Stephen, younger son of Mr and Mrs Michael Perrett, of Hale, Cheshire, and Victoria, daughter of Mr Roy Morris, DL, and Mrs Morris, of Formby, Merseyside.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Charles Montagu, Earl of Halifax, statesman, President of the Royal Society 1695-98, Horton, Northamptonshire, 1661; Sir John Franklin, Arctic explorer, Spilsby, Lincolnshire, 1786; Anatole France, novelist and critic, Paris, 1844; Wilbur Wright, pioneer of aviation, Milville, Indiana, 1867; John Millington Synge, dramatist, Newtown Litten, near Dublin, 1871; Sir Charles (Charlie) Chaplin, actor, London, 1889; Sir John Bagot Gubb (Gubb Pasha), commander of the Arab Legion 1939-56, Preston, Lancashire, 1897.

DEATHS: George Villiers, 2nd Duke of Buckingham, statesman, Kirkby Moorside, Yorkshire, 1687; Henry Fuseli, painter and writer, London, 1825; Francesco de Goya, painter, Bordeaux, 1828; Marie Tussaud, founder of the waxwork exhibition, London, 1850; Alexis Charles de Tocqueville, historian, Carnes, 1859; St Bernadette of Lourdes, Nevers, France, 1879; Samuel Smiles, social reformer, London, 1904; Edna Ferber, novelist, New York, 1968.

The Duke of Cumberland's forces defeated the Jacobite Scots at the Battle of Culloden, 1746. The Royal Yacht *Britannia* was launched, 1953. The communist Khmer Rouge seized Phnom Penh, capital of Cambodia, 1975.

LEWIS: Stella (née East), widow of Claude Blaxland Lewis, died peacefully at Victoria Nursing Home, Much loved by family and friends. Funeral at New Southgate Crematorium, on Wednesday 21st April at 1.30pm.

HUMPHRIES: (née Calder), On April 13th 1999, peacefully in hospital, Valerie, aged 86 years of Gethley, Cheshire. The beloved wife of Gerard and mother of Stephen, Paul, David, Frances and Bernard. All enquires to c/o The Director of St Mary's, tel 0161 428 2087.

JONES: Garda, aged 94, peacefully on 13th April. Beloved wife of the late Harry MacDonnell Jones (Nep) and dearly loved mother of Jennifer. Funeral at 2.15pm at St Marylebone Crematorium, East End Road, East Finchley, London N2. Family flowers only please. Donations, if desired, to The Dogs Home Battersea, c/o The Director General, Battersea Park Road, London SW8 4AA.

LAMPRELL-JARRETT: On 13th April 1999, Peter Neville Lamprell-Jarrett, RSCG, KCGB, leaving his home at 11, St. John's, Battersea Park Road, London SW8 4AA. Beloved husband of Joan and father of Graham and Sarah. Family flowers only please. Donations, if desired, to The Royal Theatrical Fund c/o J.H. Kenyon, Farnham, Surrey, GU10 2AA. Private family cremation.

ROSTON: Gordon, aged 87, passed peacefully in his sleep at his home, surrounded by his wife, daughter and son. He will be missed by all his family and friends. Service on Saturday at 2.00pm, 17th April at Emmanuel Evangelical Church, Marlborough Street, SW1. Donations if desired to the church or flowers to the cemetery. Service Tuesday 20th April, 2.00pm at Carlisle Cemetery Chapel, Stock Lane, Farnham, Surrey. Flyde, Blackpool, FY6 7GS.

RUFFIN: Peacefully on 12th April 1999 after a short stay in hospital. Christian, elder daughter of the late M.E. Ruffin DSO OBE TD. Christian, daughter of the late M.E. Ruffin of Fitt Cottages, Mickleham, Kent. Beloved wife of the late M.E. Ruffin and mother of Mrs Ruffin of Fitt Cottages, Mickleham, Kent. Beloved wife of the late M.E. Ruffin and mother of Mrs Ruffin of Fitt Cottages, Mickleham, Kent. Beloved wife of the late M

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THE TIMES



Worth the Waits

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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

FRIDAY APRIL 16 1999

Strauss-Kahn on collision course with ECB

By ALASDAIR MURRAY,
ECONOMICS
CORRESPONDENT

DOMINIQUE Strauss-Kahn, the French Finance Minister, yesterday set France on a potential collision course with the European Central Bank, saying that he wanted euro-land governments to introduce "quantifiable, binding" employment targets.

M. Strauss-Kahn said that he was willing to respond to ECB demands to tighten French public spending but Europe also needed firm job growth targets and higher spending on "innovative" new business ventures.

Speaking before the weekend's informal European Finance Ministers' meeting in Dresden, he added that he was confident an agreement on introducing a withholding tax on savings interest could be achieved by June.

Britain has steadfastly set itself against the new tax — which would also apply to bonds held overseas — unless taxpayers are specifically exempted. London is the global centre of the \$3.25 trillion euro-bond market and the British Government is concerned that the tax could drive much of the business abroad, causing widespread job losses in the City.

Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, yesterday insisted that Britain would veto the measure unless its concerns about the euro-bond market were addressed. A compromise proposal has been floated that would see euro-bond holdings above £40,000 (£26,000) exempted from the tax, effectively restricting the tax to small-scale European investors.

However, Mario Monti, the acting EU Taxation Commissioner, ruled out this plan on Wednesday, claiming that it would lead to unfair tax discrimination. M. Strauss-Kahn's plans for job targets are unlikely to win the backing of senior ECB figures, who yesterday stepped up the pressure on euro-land governments to introduce structural reforms.

A succession of ECB council members played down the impact of last week's half-point rate cut, repeating the Bank's view that only profound structural reforms could solve Europe's unemployment problems. Otto Issing, ECB chief economist, said: "It's an additional impulse about which one should have no illusions."

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Electra shock as 3i's bid vote is defeated

By ROBERT COLE, CITY CORRESPONDENT

ELECTRA Investment Trust last night beat off the hostile takeover approach from rival venture manager 3i.

The sometimes bitter tussle for control ended as shareholders voted to accept a wind-up plan put to them by the Electra board.

Electra won by a narrow margin. To survive as an independent it needed to win 75 per cent support of its shareholders. It won 76.15 per cent support of those shareholders voting.

3i made it a condition of its bid that the Electra buyback plan should be voted down. However, some observers were suggesting last night that the battle may not end here.

Questions have been raised about the late purchases of a 1.5 per cent stake in Electra. Since that stake was larger than Electra's winning margin, the propriety of the purchase could be called into question.

The result of the vote came

after the stock market closed. However, before the result was known, 3i shares rose by 30p, to 689p.

At this price the 3i cash and share offer would have been worth 764p per Electra share. This is 20p more than the price at which Electra shares were trading prior to the opening of bid activity, but below the 786p price at which Electra has promised to buy back up to 40 per cent of its shares.

The theoretic value of the 3i offer is also some way behind the 915p asset value which the Electra board said was the underlying true value of trust shares.

The rise in 3i shares came before the result of the poll was known. Some attributed the rise to the fact that 3i seemed likely to win and be strengthened by Electra. Others suggested that the price rose on the belief that 3i would fail in its attempt, and not be burdened with the debt required to undertake the purchase.

Michael Stoddard, the chairman of Electra, said: "I am delighted that Electra shareholders have supported the board's proposals. The board will now implement the tender offer and is confident that it will deliver enhanced value for shareholders into the future."

At yesterday's shareholder meeting called to discuss and vote on the proposals, Mr Stoddard indicated that the trust may continue to exist permanently — if there was sufficient investor interest.

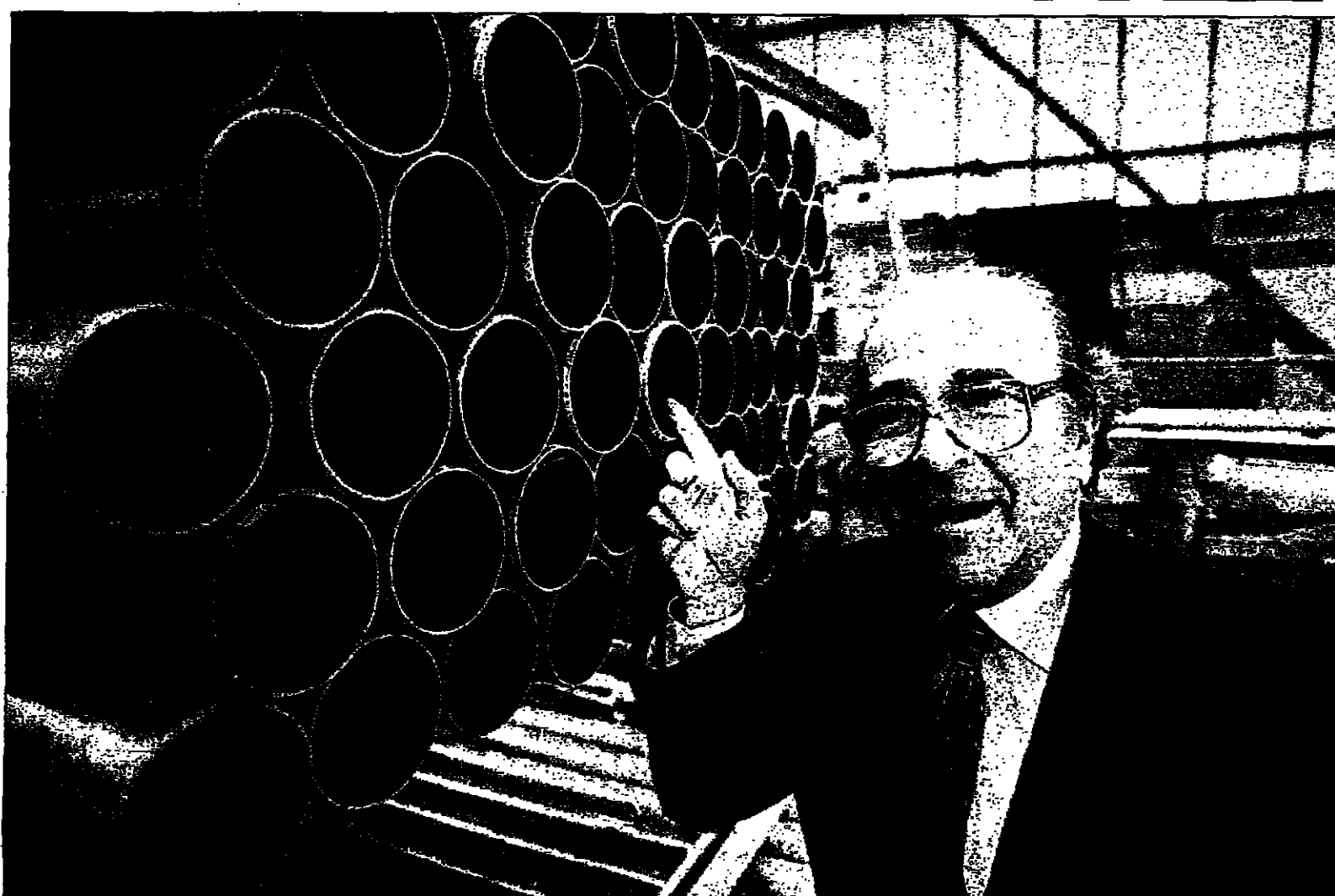
The stated, and now approved, plan is to buy back up to 40 per cent of the shares at 786p and then execute what Mr Stoddard said would be an "orderly" liquidation of the trust over the next five years.

The official plan involved a series of buybacks, funded by borrowings and sustained by asset disposals. The aim was to continue with the process until Electra disappeared.

However, Mr Stoddard indicated yesterday that if it became apparent that all shareholders who wanted a cash exit had been satisfied, and remaining shareholders wanted to continue to participate, then Electra could continue to trade permanently.

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IMI deal gives Polypipe chief £70m



Kevin McDonald, a former plumbing teacher, will receive £70 million from the £337 million sale of his Polypipe plastic fittings business to IMI

By MATTHEW BARBOUR

A MAN who began a plastic fittings business 35 years ago in a small back room in Doncaster and later created the Polypipe plumbing group is to receive £70 million after selling up to IMI, the engineering group.

Kevin McDonald, executive chairman of Polypipe, yesterday announced that he is selling, for £337 million in cash, the plastic piping and plumbing supplies group that he built up. He will become a non-executive director of IMI.

Mr McDonald, formerly a plumbing teacher, created Polypipe in 1960 from his Barlow Plastics firm to try to undercut existing plastic fittings manufacturers. He floated the

company five years later at a market value of £11 million.

A keen grouse shot, Mr McDonald, 65, has been described by members of his board as a "benevolent dictator". Still a resident of Yorkshire and married with two young children, he is a close friend of Barry Pointon, an executive director of IMI.

Bid talks between the two

boards are believed to have taken only three weeks to complete. Geoffrey Harrison, a business partner of Mr McDonald and a non-executive director of Polypipe, will make £10 million from the sale.

IMI's 200p-a-share offer is 27 per cent above Polypipe's closing price on Tuesday. Polypipe, which had 193 employ-

ees at flotation and now has 3,000, last year reported pre-tax profits of £35 million.

Trevor Slack, IMI finance director, said: "This deal isn't about huge cost savings in the traditional sense. It's about leveraging growth through our existing network, opening up new markets and using Polypipe's technical expertise and new product innovation."

City Deal to shed 180 jobs

By MARTIN WALLER

CITY DEAL SERVICES, a private client stockbroker owned by Abbey National, has been forced to transfer most of its business to a rival firm. The move will cost the jobs of 180 at its office in Rensford, Essex.

City Deal, an execution-only broker, was bought by Abbey along with Cater Allen, the moneybroker, in 1997. A spokeswoman said the redundancies would follow the outsourcing of order processing to Pershing Securities.

"The planned growth of City Deal's business means that the existing infrastructure and systems are not capable of handling higher volumes of business," she said.

Graeme Dart, City Deal's IT director, said: "The best way for us to grow our business and to deliver the infrastructure required is through the outsource."

ICI makes disposals of £1.7bn to Huntsman

By PAUL DURMAN

ICI yesterday took an important step towards completing its transformation into a specialty chemicals company when it confirmed £1.7 billion of disposals to Huntsman, America's largest family-owned chemicals group.

Some analysts were surprised that ICI has sold its well-regarded polyurethanes business as well as TiO₂, which makes a white pigment used in paints and paper, and a group of loss-making petrochemicals businesses.

ICI will only receive £1.3 billion of cash this year and it will initially retain a 30 per cent stake in Huntsman ICI, a company comprising the disposed businesses and Huntsman's propylene oxide operation.

Martin Evans, head of research at Sutherland, the broker, said: "It's a move in the right direction but it's still sad-

died with loss-making commodity chemicals and a high level of net debt, and it's given away or sold a quite good business in polyurethanes."

Charles Miller Smith, ICI's chief executive, insisted the group had achieved "very good" prices. However, the £1.05 billion that Huntsman is paying for polyurethanes represents a multiple of 11.7

times, and the £500 million price for TiO₂ is £100 million less than ICI agreed with DuPont and NL Industries last year, before those deals were superseded by competition concerns.

Mr Miller Smith, who is focusing ICI on starch, fragrances and flavours and paints, said: "We believe we

are in the home straight in the journey to change the character of ICI." Shares in ICI rose 23 1/2p to 659p yesterday — still barely half the price they reached last May.

Jon Huntsman, a highly-regarded chemicals industry veteran who has built a \$7 billion business from scratch in 16 years, said he was "absolutely not" interested in taking Huntsman public because commodity chemicals companies would always be poorly valued because investors and analysts. The businesses ICI is selling employ 6,000, 1,900 in the UK. Mr Huntsman said his company had never laid off a worker and needed ICI's managers and experienced people.

ICI will have to make £195 million of provisions to cover pension, environmental and other costs. It will also incur another £65 million of costs from curbing its corporate overheads.

Dispute looms on C&W bid

By ROBERT WHYMAN
IN TOKYO
AND CHRIS AYRES

A DISPUTE over protectionism looks likely to erupt between Britain and Japan after a decision by International Digital Communications (IDC), the Japanese telephone company, to reject a £327 million takeover bid from Cable & Wireless, the UK group.

IDC's board instead voted to accept an almost identical offer by Japan's domestic telephone company, NTT. The decision will be seen as an embarrassment for Japan's Government — a controlling shareholder in NTT — which is committed to liberalising its telecoms industry.

Stephen Byers, Trade and Industry Secretary, has told the Japanese Government that "a successful bid from NTT will raise the issue of competition and regulatory policy in Japan".

Glotel stock flotation to net Baker £50m

By JASON NISSE

A 33-YEAR-OLD computer personnel tycoon is set to make about £50 million from the flotation of his company in the next few weeks.

Andy Baker founded Glotel just ten years ago when he left Hestair, the recruitment arm of the conglomerate BET. He and his boss at Hestair — Les Clark — decided to set up a specialist telecommunications and information technology recruitment firm and the company now employs 245 people in the UK, US and Australia.

Both Mr Baker and Mr Clark — who is 54 — each own 50 per cent of Glotel, though they intend to cut their stake on flo-

tation and give up to 5 per cent of the company to staff.

The business is expected to come to market through a placing by HSBC Securities, the broker, which this week issued a glowing investment report predicting the company would record revenue in the year to March 31 of £101 million and profit of £4.4 million. On the basis of valuations achieved by similar firms, this would put the worth of Glotel at between £100 million and £150 million.

MSB, which is in the same market, was valued at more than £200 million at its peak but has suffered because of the departure of its founder, Mark Goldberg, and Mr Goldberg's decision to sell his

shares to fund his disastrous purchase of Crystal Palace Football Club.

Robert Walters, the IT and banking recruitment group, was sold to Staffmark of the US for £110 million last summer. Its founder — of the same name — picked up £26.5 million in the deal.

Glotel has strengthened its board ahead of the float, bringing in Chris Adkins, the former finance director of Sherwood Computers, and two non-executives — Glyn Hirsch, chief executive of CLS Holdings, the property group, and Robin Saxby, chairman of ARM Holdings, the computer chip company.

Mr Baker did not want to speak to The Times about his impending good fortune.



Andy Baker, who founded Glotel ten years ago with Les Clark

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Channel ferry deal boosts tunnel

By FRASER NELSON

EUROTUNNEL has managed to pull off its sharpest ever price increases — thanks to the merger of P&O and Stena's cross-channel ferry services.

Drivers taking their cars through the tunnel were charged £109 for a five-day return ticket in the first three months of the year, a 56 per cent increase on 1998.

Eurotunnel said this was made possible by similar price increases imposed by the newly merged P&O and Stena Line cross-channel service. The ferry operators' five-day peak return has risen by 25 per cent this year, to £195.

The number of cars carried by Eurotunnel's Le Shuttle subsidiary rose by 4.4 per cent, in spite of the higher charges. Eurotunnel said: "We had to compete with unrealistic price promotions, and prices are now getting back to normal."

The price of an economy return for drivers peaked at £328 in the summer of 1996, but fell as drivers defected to the ferries.

Eurotunnel intends to push the price of an open return to £239, from £190, this summer.

Eurotunnel owns the tunnel, and runs the short-haul Le Shuttle operation. It takes access charges from Eurostar, the separately owned passenger train service.



Seascope Shipping Holdings, where Tom Young, left, is chairman, and Duncan Hill is chief executive designate, has fought off the impact of the Asian economic crisis to report a 13.3 per cent increase in pre-tax profit to £3.5 million. A final dividend of 10p was declared, making 15p for the year (3p).

British Midland profits slump despite rise in passengers

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY
AVIATION CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH MIDLAND, the UK's second-biggest scheduled airline, saw profits slump by a third last year despite attracting record numbers of passengers.

Sir Michael Bishop, chairman, reported that yields had fallen under the "aggressive challenge" from low-cost carriers as well as being hit by the drop in business travel.

Though this saw pre-tax profits fall to £11 million from £16.7 million the privately owned carrier reported a 5 per

cent growth in passenger numbers, to six million. That helped achieve a record turnover of £538 million.

Sir Michael said that the fall in profits was due largely to the £4.5 million "windfall" in the prior year when the company

took advantage of the 1997 British Airways strike.

He said that a further £4 million had been set aside this year in losses in challenging the British Airways monopoly on the Heathrow-Manchester route. The airline claims to

have secured more than 330,000 passengers on the route.

British Midland is setting its sights on breaking into the transatlantic market when the US and British Governments sign a bilateral agreement to

open up air services between the two countries. It has been granted licences to serve New York, Washington, Boston and Miami.

Aer Lingus, another company battling against the budget operators, yesterday reported a sharp rise in profits.

The Irish national airline said that its heavily contested Dublin-London route proved a significant contributor to the success. The company's pre-tax profit of £46.6 million for 1998 was up 14 per cent, while the passenger total increased by 10 per cent, to 5.8 million.

MCNULTY APPOINTED TO OVERSEE SALE OF AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL

MINISTERS last night increased the momentum towards the sale of the air traffic control service by appointing a new chairman to oversee the partial sell-off. John Prescott appointed Sir Roy McNulty, chairman of Shorts, as chairman of National Air Traffic Services. Government officials said that the partial sale of

NATS would take place during the two-and-a-half-year period of his tenure, which is due to last until October 2002. It was originally thought that the sale of 51 per cent of NATS would raise £500 million, but John Reid, the Transport Minister, has said that a delayed sale may be needed to achieve the best price. Commentary, page 29

NET PROFITS

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Vodafone free call move

By CHRIS AYRES

THE mobile phone industry is poised for a vicious price war, with Vodafone, Britain's largest mobile phone company, revealing yesterday that it would give more free calls to customers and cut its peak-time call rates.

The move follows the announcement of aggressive price cuts by One 2 One, Vodafone's smaller rival, earlier this week. One 2 One has also radically reorganised its so-called "pre-pay" tariffs —

which involve customers paying for calls with vouchers instead of signing up to long term contracts — by cutting call prices, and introducing a "daily charge", starting at 50p.

In response, Vodafone will give 250 minutes of free calls subscribers to its £14.99-a-month service instead of 180. At the same time, the company will reduce peak-time call rates on many other tariffs.

Celnet and Orange, Britain's other two mobile phone

operators, have not responded to Vodafone's and One 2 One's price cuts. Orange said that through its "value promise" offer, it would match tariffs offered by any rival.

Vodafone yesterday paid £22 million for MC Mobile Service Communications, the small mobile phone service provider owned by Cable & Wireless Communications. Vodafone also signed a deal with CWC which will see them offer "integrated" phone services.

Off-roaders give Ford a lift

FROM ADAM JONES, IN NEW YORK

THE growing popularity of off-road vehicles among Americans has helped Ford and General Motors to weather tough markets in Europe.

Ford said yesterday that operating profits for the first three months of 1999 were \$1.81 billion (£1.12 billion), up 20 per cent on last year and ahead of analysts' forecast.

Sales in the UK, Ford's biggest foreign market, dropped from 142,000 vehicles to 126,000 in the period. This was

despite the introduction of the Focus, the successor to the Escort. The purchase of Volvo and the growth of the Jaguar subsidiary may mean that Ford's plans to introduce the Lincoln luxury range into Europe will be shelved.

John Devine, chief financial officer, fuelled speculation that Ford will make Visteon, its parts subsidiary, a stand-alone company.

GM is already cutting loose its Delphi parts arm, which is

now free to use its independence to tie-up big supply agreements with other carmakers.

Mr Devine admitted Visteon risked being left behind.

GM, which owns Vauxhall and Opel in Europe, said net profits were \$2.1 billion in the first three months of 1999, up from \$1.6 billion in 1998. Market share in Europe fell from 9.8 per cent to 9.6 per cent but GM said new models, such as the Vauxhall Zafira, would improve the situation.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank	Bank
	Buys	Sells
Australia \$	2.45	2.45
Austria Sch	21.56	19.93
Belgium Fr	63.55	58.99
Canada \$	2.53	2.51
Cyprus Cyp £	0.9095	0.8380
Denmark Kr	11.71	10.12
Egypt	5.73	5.12
Finland Mk	9.45	8.70
France Fr	10.26	9.50
Germany Dr	3.090	2.948
Greece Dr	51.1	47.2
Hong Kong \$	13.37	12.17
Iceland	130	110
Indonesia	17584	12584
Ireland P	1.2229	1.1438
Israel Sh	6.88	6.22
Italy Lit	3073	2836
Japan Yen	207.20	198.57
Korea	0.676	0.617
Netherlands Gld	3.468	3.193
New Zealand \$	3.12	2.88
Norway Kr	13.07	12.13
Portugal Esc	312.50	290.47
S Africa Rd	10.48	9.25
Spain Ptas	260.44	241.65
Sweden Kr	14.16	13.06
Switzerland Fr	2.554	2.336
Turkey Lira	63.859	590.68
USA \$	1.705	1.582

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques.

Brands Hatch chief raises the stakes with letter over restructuring

Silverstone battle moves up a gear

By JASON NISSE

NICOLA FOULSTON, chief executive of Brands Hatch Leisure, has intensified the battle over the future of Silverstone with an open letter to members of the British Racing Drivers Club (BRDC) which owns the racetrack.

The letter — published today in the motor sport press — opposes many parts of the proposed restructuring of the club, which is expected to lead to a flotation of Silverstone.

Members will vote on the restructuring next week against the background of Brands Hatch indicating that it would bid about £50 million for Silverstone if the BRDC wanted to sell it.

The restructuring, put together by Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the merchant bank, would allow the BRDC to own the freehold of Silverstone but lease it to a separate, newly created company, controlled by the BRDC.

Ms Foulston's letter opposes the clauses in the restructuring that would give a golden share in the new company to the BRDC board. She says this would restrict the rights of individual shareholders. She then calls for the BRDC to sell Silverstone to Brands Hatch, which owns the Kent racetrack of the same name.

A BRDC spokesman said he was glad Ms Foulston broadly supported the restructuring but added: "Silver-

stone is worth more than the current market value of Brands Hatch." Yesterday that stood at £70 million.

The waters have been muddied further by the intervention of Bernie Ecclestone, the entrepreneur who controls Formula 1 motor racing. He has said that he supports Ms Foulston's bid and would only keep the British Grand Prix at Silverstone if the track is sold to Brands Hatch.

The contract to host the Grand Prix runs until 2001, but Mr Ecclestone can tear up the deal if the BRDC sells the racetrack. He has indicated that if anyone other than Brands Hatch bought Silverstone, he would merely move the race to Brands Hatch.



Foulston: opposes parts of plan

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

BCC sees recovery for the economy

THE economy is poised for recovery, with confidence in both the manufacturing and services sector improving rapidly, according to a new report yesterday. The British Chambers of Commerce quarterly economic survey also reported a marked improvement in the export position, with the service sector returning to growth while manufacturing exports declined at a much slower rate than in previous quarters.

However, the BCC cautioned that the overall health of the economy remains fragile, with manufacturing domestic sales declining at their fastest rate for six years during the first quarter. Unemployment is also beginning to rise more rapidly, with manufacturers shedding staff at the fastest rate for six years, while service sector job creation has also slowed sharply. Ian Peters, the deputy director-general of the BCC, said that with costs pressures remaining subdued, the Bank of England should make another quarter reduction in rates as soon as possible to aid the recovery. He added that the Bank was aware of the BCC findings ahead of last week's Monetary Policy Committee meeting when the Bank made its latest rate cut.

Cadbury US purchase

CADBURY SCHWEPPE, the group which earlier this year agreed to sell all its soft drinks operations outside of the US for £1.4 billion, bought Hawaiian Punch, America's favourite fruit punch, yesterday for £126 million. It is buying the juice-based, non-fizzy drink from Procter & Gamble and it will be managed and distributed by Cadbury Schweppes's Dr Pepper/Seven Up operations. John Sunderland, chief executive, said: "The acquisition emphasises our commitment to the important US soft drink market."

Scotia scraps drug

SHARES in Scotia Holdings fell by almost 10 per cent yesterday after it abandoned work on its drug to treat pancreatic cancer. Scrapping Glamolec means that Scotia has failed with three products that it filed for regulatory approval — a failure rate far in excess of the industry norm. The apparently advanced state of Scotia's drug portfolio gave the company a £600 million valuation three years ago. Yesterday its shares fell 13p to 126p, valuing it at just under £100 million. Scotia withdrew Glamolec from regulators' consideration last year.

Terranova's KFC deal

TERRANOVA, the foods group subject to a £229 million hostile takeover offer from Unigate, said yesterday that its Buxted Foods subsidiary had won a £9 million-a-year contract from KFC, the fast-food group. The deal is to supply to KFC a "new menu item" that will be launched during the summer. Paul Lewis, Terranova's chairman, said: "This example of Terranova's success in the important food service market reinforces our belief that Unigate's hostile bid significantly undervalues the company."

PacificCorp's £111m sale

PACIFICORP, ScottishPower's planned takeover target in the US, is to sell a £111 million business. Its electric service area in California is to go to Nor-Cal Electric Authority. ScottishPower said it had known about the sale when it launched its bid for PacificCorp. The offer is currently facing regulatory investigation. The sale of PacificCorp's Californian business will be completed next year. This is subject to a separate regulatory inquiry.

Sega launch date

SEGA, the Japanese video games company, is to launch its new Dreamcast games console on September 23, priced at £199. Sega hopes that the product — which it claims is the "most powerful video game console ever created" — will hit sales of Sony's PlayStation. The Dreamcast is four times more powerful than the PlayStation, and can access the Internet. However, Dreamcast consoles will be twice as expensive as PlayStation. Sony is developing a next-generation PlayStation, expected to be even faster than the Dreamcast.

Deloitte on the up

DELOITTE & TOUCHE, one of the big five accountants, claimed yesterday that its fee levels are set to grow by nearly a third this year. John Connolly, who is today confirmed as the firm's new senior partner and chief executive in the UK, said: "Our growth rate continued to grow when the economy started struggling. We are running at over 30 per cent growth this year. We have never had results like this." He added that the audit division — often seen as the growth laggard in accounting firms — was growing at more than 20 per cent.

Richardson referred

NATIONAL DATA CORPORATION's acquisition of John Richardson Computers, a supplier of software systems to retail pharmacies, has been referred to the Competition Commission. The acquisition, valued at £2.5 million, from the market research group Taylor Nelson Sofres, was found to have potential competition problems by Kim Howells, the Trade Minister. Dr Howells said, however, that these could be waived as long as NDC did not inhibit pharmacies from supplying pharmaceutical data to parties other than NDC.

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COMMENTARY by our City Editor

So — by a margin reminiscent of last year's vote to keep Nationwide a building society — the board of Electra Investment Trust succeeded with its honey-covered poison pill defence to 31's bid. Here we have a deal to wind up the trust, which betrays the worst elements of both the investment trust industry and the venture capital industry, voted through by the massed ranks of institutional investors whose taste buds moisten at the thought of the deal being handed to the team at Electra Fleming, which runs the trust.

For those who complain about fat cattery among our captains of industry — people who actually run businesses rather than move money from place to place — consider the £30 million bonus pool awaiting the Electra Fleming folk if they successfully wind up the trust. Or consider the fact that the "carried interest" element allowed in Electra transactions — that is the amount the managers are able to cream off for themselves — is increased from 5 per cent to 8 per cent. Imagine if your independent financial adviser tried to sell you an ISA with entry charge of 8 per cent and a cash bonus to the manager if the price rises. You would be running to the regulators faster than you could say "Financial Services Authority".

Yet this is all so commonplace in the venture capital industry. Entry charges, management

charges, exit charges, carried interest and sweet equity abound. Deals are done at prices few can believe, leveraged to the hilt and resold at a premium to the market. The venture capitalists argue that they still deliver a better return than conventional active fund managers. Well, that is like saying your football team plays better than Nottingham Forest. Has no-one noticed that investors are so disenchanted with active fund managers that they are flocking to low-cost, reliable, tracker funds.

The mood of the small investors attending yesterday's meeting was that they did not really want to see Electra sold to 31, but neither did they want Electra to wind itself up. They appeared happy with the absolute returns Electra has generated during its 23-year life and despite the threat of the net asset value discount that afflicts all investment trusts — apart from 31 — seemed happy to persist with their Electra investment.

However the institutions wanted cash and cash they will get. Michael Stoddart, Electra's chairman, said there may be a continuation fund if there is enough demand. Meanwhile small investors

will have to make do with what the City says is good for them. But Mr Stoddart, if investment trusts have a role, it is to serve small investor needs and the needs of smaller investors that do not have their own in-house private equity expertise. It would be as well for managers not to forget this demand. It could be the only demand they have to live off if current trends in the investment trust industry persist.

Withholding tax is the new poll tax

John Prescott hit just the right note in Parliament on Wednesday. He transposed the planned EU withholding tax on investment income with the poll tax. If only Gordon Brown could see priorities so clearly.

Both levies were logically thought out and for the best motives. Poll tax made local electors put their money where their

votes were. The withholding tax aims to stop German and other government revenues being threatened by hordes of investors drawing income gross from abroad, usually Luxembourg, and illegally failing to declare it.

Both taxes, equally, have potential side-effects so bad that they must be ruled out completely. They include wiping out the London eurobond trade, which was born because of restrictive taxes in America and would in turn migrate to Zurich or whichever other centre resists EU bullying. But there is time to avoid repeating the poll tax mistakes with the withholding tax.

Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the French Finance Minister, thinks it could take until June to agree a final compromise deal. Mr Brown could resolve it today, at the start of the EU finance ministers meeting in Dresden, if he is serious about protecting the financial services from the sort of cave-ins that destroyed our fish-

ing and motor industries. Sadly, the City will have little confidence in its Chancellor.

After Mr Prescott's somewhat oblique response to the withholding tax question, Downing Street explained that "it's a tax on savings and we are against it." Coming from a Government that has slapped a new £5 billion-a-year tax on pension savings and re-introduced tax on capital gains from inflation, this is not convincing. Nor is Mr Brown's pledge that he will agree to nothing that would "seriously" harm the City.

Compromise is in the air. A German proposal would exempt interest on holding above about £27,000. Mario Monti, the outgoing Tax Commissioner, rightly points out that this would be unfair and, rather worse, invite huge distortions.

Under lumbering EU procedures, they could not easily be corrected later. Any arbitrary or inflexible distinctions are bound to become nonsense as rapidly as

financial markets evolve. At the last EU summit, our Government insisted on keeping our rebate when it could safely have been offered as part of wide reform. The City, like others, is likely to pay the price because, John Prescott apart, ministers will always put image before business.

Over and out time for NATS

Meanwhile in another part of Prescottland, Tony Blair's answer to Cardinal Wolsey was appointing a new chairman for National Air Traffic Services. Sir Roy McNulty is no doubt a fine choice. An Irishman who qualified as an accountant in Scotland and went on to run Shorts in Belfast before selling it to Bombardier of Canada, he understands finance, aerospace, wheeling and dealing and, most importantly, how to sell the family silver to foreigners.

However his role at NATS is not to sell the family silver. It is to flog a sickly — if not indeed already dead — horse.

Consider the evidence. NATS has an ageing air traffic control centre which is close to being

swamped by the amount of traffic it needs to handle. The computers in this centre would no doubt be familiar to Charles Babbage and if they are Y2K compliant it is probably because they were built before the bug was thought of. NATS is in the process of building a new traffic control centre. But its technology partner, Lockheed Martin, has been slower than a week in jail and the costs have spiralled.

Meanwhile Gordon Brown thinks NATS is a jewel worth £500 million for Treasury coffers and wants to privatise it. The Deputy Prime Minister appears not to be sure this is a good idea.

He has no doubt told Sir Roy to have an open mind. This may be code for "give me an excuse to kill this privatisation". One hopes so.

Costly experiment

ICI PAID so much for Unilever's chemicals businesses that the foods group thought it best to return the money to shareholders rather than attempt the Herculean task of earning a better return. The resulting debt has now forced ICI to be a seller of other businesses at what some think is not exactly the optimum time. Changing your portfolio of businesses to give steadier growth potential is fine. Unfortunately, selling what others are selling and buying what others are buying tends to be a costly process.

Booker secures refinancing plan with banks

By FRASER NELSON

STUART ROSE, the chief executive of Booker, has agreed a £650 million refinancing package with its 21 banks — removing the threat of receivership that has been hanging over the company for the past four months.

The struggling cash and carry company has agreed to pay a sharply higher interest rate on its £550 million of borrowings. In return, it retains its £650 million overdraft limit and has two years to return to financial health.

Mr Rose said: "Our banking facilities were due for renewal, and the risk was that

the banks might say: 'sorry guys, we don't want to lend you more money'.

"The fact that it has taken four months to resolve shows how serious the situation was. But we've now agreed a deal until 2001."

Shares of Booker fell 1p to 64p yesterday as analysts said the company still has everything to prove. One said: "At least it's not going to go bust, but Stuart Rose is firefighting, and he's still got a tough task ahead of him."

Mr Rose said the company will take a further £50 million hit this year, through goodwill

writedowns and about £20 million for rationalisation.

The company will now sell five of its six divisions, raising an estimated £200 million.

It hopes to sell Booker Food Services and Abor Acres in the next few months, its other divisions — Marine Harvest, McConnell fish farming and the Booker Tate and Fletcher Smith sugar businesses — should go towards the end of the year.

Mr Rose told analysts that he had a two-phase plan to re-juvenate its 157 cash and carry stores. The first will be an efficiency drive, involving an overhaul of internal management and possibly more job losses to add to the 200 already going at head office.

It will then give its product range a complete revamp, introducing new lines of meat, chilled food and ethnic foods.

Mr Rose said: "We sell to 370,000 caterers and 120,000 shopkeepers, and we are turning them away because we don't stock what they want. Yet we sell eight brands of Garibaldi biscuits when we could happily get by with three."

Booker made a £90.8 million loss for the six months to December 26 against a £68.7 million profit last time. Underlying profit dropped to £11.3 million (£54.1 million).

The company spent £1.3 million on lawyers and advisers' fees during its abortive merger talks with Somerfield and Budgens and took a £13.2 million charge to cover redundancies. As its year end is changed to March 31, the figures were a second set of interim results.



Reflecting well: Arild Nerdrum, chairman of Caverdale, the motorcycle, bicycle and leisure marine group, reported a 40 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £6 million for 1998. A final dividend of 2.25p was declared, making 4.5p (4p) for the year

Russell slides as RMC talks fail

By ROBERT LEA

SHARES of Alexander Russell, a quarrying and concrete products group based in Llanarkshire, dived yesterday after the company said that it had called off talks with RMC, the industry leader and its biggest shareholder.

The collapse of the negotiations are likely to have saved about 100 administration jobs at the company's headquarters in Uddingstone, Glasgow.

Alexander Russell said that after ten weeks of negotiations aimed at achieving a recommended offer for the company, its board had been unable to reach agreement with RMC.

which was interested in acquiring the 75 per cent of the company that it did not own.

While there has been speculation that venture capital firms may also be interested in making an offer for Russell, Graeme Nicolson, the company's managing director, said: "The board confirms that no discussions have been taking place with any other party."

That was enough to push stock in the £20 million company down sharply, falling 25p to 112½p. The bid speculation had seen the shares rise sharply from 68½p at the turn of the year.

Reed Elsevier's job hunt widens

By RAYMOND SNOODY, MEDIA EDITOR

REED ELSEVIER, the Anglo-Dutch publishing and information group seeking a new chief executive has expanded its shortlist after the end of talks with the Simon & Schuster chief executive, Jonathan Newcomb.

The shortlist was effectively frozen in January while detailed talks continued with Mr Newcomb, who has lost half his empire through the sale of Simon & Schuster education and business publishing to Pearson.

Since January, a number of possible candidates have become free to be considered, it

is believed. Even if Mr Newcomb had agreed to become chief executive of Reed Elsevier, he would not have been free to join it immediately.

Reed Elsevier is optimistic that there will not be extra delays in getting the new person in place.

Morris Tabaksblat, the retiring head of Unilever who will become non-executive chairman of Reed Elsevier in June, declined to say after its annual meeting yesterday how many people were on the shortlist, other than to say: "It's a relatively small group we are talking to."

Stadium gives farewell boost to Wembley

By JASON NISSE

A HOMELESS Welsh rugby team and an Arsenal football team constrained by home ground capacity helped Wembley Stadium to contribute £13.9 million to Wembley plc in its final year in the listed group's ownership.

The Welsh used Wembley for two home matches because their new national stadium was not finished and Arsenal used it for three European games. The company made an estimated profit of £500,000 on each of these matches.

The stadium was earlier this year sold for £103 million to a trust backed by the Football Association, provoking a dispute within Wembley's board as three non-executive directors, Jarvis Astaire, Peter Mead and Michael Stoddart, campaigned to stop the deal.

Claes Hultman, Wembley chairman, said that the three were now going to re-

sign and would be replaced. "It was a disagreement on strategy and the shareholders did not agree with them," he said yesterday.

Proceeds from the stadium sale are to be distributed to shareholders, and Wembley is seeking the most tax-efficient way of doing this.

The stadium's strong performance — plus the success of video lottery games at the racetrack Wembley owns at Lincoln, Rhode Island — led to a 7.6 per cent rise in profits, before tax and one-off items, to £26.8 million.

The pre-tax total, swollen by an £8.38 million surplus on property revaluation, came in at £35.2 million.

However, a much higher tax bill led to earnings per share falling 21.8 per cent, to 31.3p, on an adjusted basis.

A 35p final dividend makes 5.5p (3p). Wembley shares rose 10p to 340½p.

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Bus pair to run Northern Leisure

By DOMINIC WALSH

ADAM MILLS and Ray McEnhill, the pair who floated the National Express bus and coach group in 1992, are to take the helm at Northern Leisure, the nightclub operator.

Northern Leisure, which last month admitted "exploring strategic opportunities", is in talks to acquire Fife Group,

the former engineering concern that the two men have turned into a shell with about £11 million in cash. Their plan is to develop Northern as a significant player in the wider leisure sector.

Shares in Fife Group, formerly Fife Indmar, rose 5½p to 66½p after it confirmed that it had received an approach from Northern "that may or may not lead to an offer being made".

At that level, Fife is valued at £13.8 million, while Northern, which rose 8½p to 145½p, is worth £180 million.

A Fife spokeswoman said: "The pair have aspirations to move further in the sector, which is very fragmented and ripe for consolidation. They would like to play a role in that consolidation."

Although talks are still at a preliminary stage, it is understood that North-

ern is planning to issue new shares to fund the acquisition of Fife.

The two men are expected to become joint chief executives, allowing Nick Oppenheim, Northern's vice-chairman and 12 per cent shareholder, to fulfil his wish to step down to non-executive status.



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A question of Jett black and white on Wall Street

FOR the past five years, Joseph Jett has been branded the rogue trader who lost Kidder, Peabody, his Wall Street employer, \$350 million by reporting fictional dealing profits. On Tuesday, a campaign to clear his name begins — in the most unlikely place.

Mr Jett will go on the *Today* programme, the legendary NBC breakfast show, to further his claim that he was a scapegoat. Not only that, Mr Jett, who was one of the few black hotshots on Wall Street at the time, is now saying that he was the victim of sustained racial slurs at Kidder.

The interview is the centrepiece of the publicity campaign for his new book, *Black and White on Wall Street*. NBC, though, is a bizarre place to kick it all off.

His appearance exhumed a controversy that GE, which sold the investment bank after firing Mr Jett in 1994, would rather forget.

But Mr Jett appears unconcerned about the potential conflict of interest. He is more interested in having a forum to resurrect his career, this time as a hedge fund manager.

He won't give details, saying only that he has assembled a fund with less than \$100 million, mainly from private individuals. He says some were drawn to his notoriety on the grounds that good guys finish last. "Being well known, through fame or infamy, is a door opener," Mr Jett says.

And Mr Jett admits that he was not one of the good guys. In his early days as a trader, he was a braggart who would prop up the bar, repeatedly asking various women: "When I walk alone on high mountains, for whom do I seek, if not

Adam Jones reports on the New York rogue trader who claims he was a victim of racial slurs

you?" Apparently, it was a successful chat-up line, gilded by boasts of his Harvard MBA.

Mr Jett did not refer to race issues in any of his hearings, but in his book are new claims that he was demonised at work for dating white women. He says this led him to be unfairly harsh with female subordinates as a protective measure. "I've never billed myself as being a sympathetic character," he admits. "There are women at Kidder who could have had promising careers, who could have made more money than they did and I cut them off completely."

Mr Jett has some support in the US media, although the right-wing *American Spectator* described the book as a "vivid and

disturbing case study of a man in complete denial... like an Oliver Sacks story told from the perspective of the patient".

The reviewer took exception, among other things, to Mr Jett's claim that his superiors approved of his bond trading strategy, a claim that has been vehemently denied. The strategy involved recording unrealised profits on obscure, deferred trades. Mr Jett insists that the entries in his ledger would eventually have become genuine profits if the trades had been allowed to mature. The epic losses, he says, were only caused by a clumsy "fire sale" initiated by his superiors.

But a ruling by the Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC), the Wall Street watchdog, compared

his system with an illusory pyramid scheme, one that was designed to defraud.

Saying his superiors were only guilty of failing to question adequately where the star trader's profits came from, the SEC ordered that Mr Jett return \$8.21 million in bonuses and pay a \$200,000 fine.

Appeals have been made on both sides, with the SEC wanting a stiffer penalty. However, Mr Jett, who says his money has been eaten up by lawyers' fees, believes that at least he will never face criminal charges. The FBI has just returned his laptop computer, which would have been key evidence.

There are nagging questions on both sides. Kidder's controls certainly left something to be desired

if they were blind to the situation. The SEC ruling also went against an earlier arbitration decision that provided a victory for Mr Jett.

Fundamentally, Mr Jett's claim that he was really a brilliant trader, as opposed to a charlatan, is almost impossible to prove to the layman because of the complex nature of the transactions.

He makes great play in the book of how trading attracted him as a career because numbers ruled. Numbers were objective, hard facts, pillars of what he thought would be a meritocracy that looked at individual effectiveness, not race.

But his baffling trading patterns appeared to depend on so much that was not objective, namely the choice of accounting standard.

What is left for the observer is a shifting landscape of deepest grey. Not everything is black and white on Wall Street.



Jett: "brilliant not a charlatan"

Huntsman hits his ICI target

Carl Mortished profiles the US tycoon who successfully brings Mammon and God together

Charity begins at home. ICI's chief executive, Charles Miller Smith, might have dwelled on that old maxim as he watched Jon Huntsman, the plastics tycoon and one of America's leading philanthropists, blow hot and cold over the purchase of ICI's bulk chemicals businesses.

Huntsman Corporation has long been in the frame, pursuing the Teesside petrochemicals business for 18 months. But he was never in a hurry, leaving ICI to stew over Easter. The devout Mormon and chairman of America's largest private chemicals firm went home to Salt Lake City to celebrate the holiday with his family.

Jon Huntsman likes a willing seller and over the past year, ICI has been behaving like a seller not just keen but quite hysterical. DuPont, the original buyer of the TiO₂ businesses, was barred by the Federal Trade Commission, and the market has punished ICI stock for its heavy debt since it took over Unilever's fragrance and food additive businesses.

ICI's acrylics business is now up for sale and some analysts reckon that the British company had to put more on the plate in yesterday's deal. Peter Mackie, at Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the broker, observes: "We think they had to throw in polyurethanes as a sweetener."

The American will not have to worry about shareholders, not even after writing a cheque for £1.4 billion. Dividends are an irrelevance at the chemicals company; they would only end up in Huntsman's pocket. He is said to be worth \$1 billion but lists three financial objectives: pay down debt, improve plant and facilities and put money into humanitarian projects. "Nothing has ever gone out to the family in my recollection — we've just lived on our salaries," he explains.

The US press fetes Huntsman more as philanthropist than buccaneering capitalist.



Materials gain: Jon Huntsman, left, and Charles Miller Smith yesterday after the announcement of the sale of ICI's polyurethanes business

He lavishes money on medical foundations, Ivy League colleges and even homes for battered women in Salt Lake City. Curiously, Huntsman is a major contributor to Roman Catholic charities active in the Third World, earning this God-fearing Mormon an audience with the Pope.

The stock market was yesterday more interested in Mammon: shares in commodity-based companies were on the rise, sensing that a turn in the cycle was due after a lengthy despond. The man himself thinks we have seen the worst. "We are within a year of the upside," But the cautious Huntsman insisted that ICI add polyurethanes to the deal to balance the volatile petrochemicals assets.

Who is this canny deal-maker? Huntsman divides every dollar of his free cash flow in half, putting 50 cents into the business and 50 into good works. Such saintliness has not made him a soft touch. He is a man

driven by a sense of larger purpose. The purple prose of the corporate mission statement and a website with cheesy pictures of him and his wife can grate on cynical eyes and ears.

The trouble is that Huntsman is entirely sincere. His story is the classic American tale of poor boy made good by hard toil, thrift and the Lord's work. "The early days were difficult. My father was a music teacher... the only job he could find was in Blackfoot, Idaho," he said, in a recent interview. It has an almost Dickensian sentimentality to it, complete with the doctor pronouncing Jon Huntsman dead at birth, a "blue baby". His father and the midwife refused to give up on the child and eventually, the future tycoon surfaced for air.

Huntsman's first business was a plastics packaging firm which will go down in history as the inventor of the "clamshell", a piece of modern industrial design that litters high streets from Tokyo to Tuscaloosa.

In 1974, he persuaded MacDonald's to use the clamshell as its Mac container and in 1976, he sold the company, delivering his shareholders 34 dollars for every dollar they invested. "Many millionaires came out of that first little company," he notes.

Then followed his first corporate deal, buying a \$42 million polystyrene plant from Shell Oil. "When I told them I would put up \$500,000 in equity they just about tossed me out of the office."

Undeterred, he came back with an even more outrageous idea. He persuaded Shell to lend him \$12 million to buy the business, giving them an IOU which he would pay back over ten years. The bumpy boy from Blackfoot then promised Arco Chemical Company that he would buy 150 million pounds of raw styrene from them every year if they lent him \$10 million up front.

With \$22 million in the bag, he secured a \$20 million loan from the bank, mortgaging his business to Shell and the bank and his house to Arco. It was the beginning of Huntsman Corporation, "literally hooked together with chewing gum and bailing wire," he said.

Huntsman is a bottom-fisher, buying businesses at the nadir of the cycle for a fraction of their replacement cost. He then runs them for cash, pushing as much volume as he can through the plant to cover the high fixed costs and the debt.

He went on to buy Texaco's chemical business for \$1 billion in 1993 jointly with Kerry Packer, the Australian media mogul, picking up a polystyrene business from Elf Atochem in the same year.

Recently, Huntsman has shed the assets of the original business, selling styrenics to Nova Chemical Company for £660 million. He is refocusing on less cyclical products, such as titanium dioxide, the pig-

ments business, surfactants and the polyurethane business acquired from ICI. He would like to buy the ICI acrylics business, which the British company put up for sale yesterday. "It is very much of interest to us."

Can this relentless expansion continue? Huntsman is a useful home for distressed sellers of rusting chemical kit. With no shareholders, no annual report, no sneering analysts

probing its accounts, it can ride out lean times. While the bosses at ICI and Shell are justifying themselves to the City's teenage scribbles, Huntsman is being showered with honorary degrees and congratulations by the man in the Vatican.

Huntsman likes it this way, with his son, Jon junior, as vice-chairman, another son, Peter as chief operating officer, his daughters on the board and 40 grandchildren waiting in the wings for their cue. He said: "We have no intention of going public. We have limited resources, we don't want to deal with shareholders. Our priority is to distribute funds to humanitarian causes, we could not do that if we had shareholders."

Huntsman is eclectic in his choice of good causes — he built a concrete plant in Armenia to help to build houses for the homeless after the 1988 earthquake. This year, he will inaugurate a new village in the country, Huntsville, having created a school and several blocks of apartments.

But his biggest cause is cancer. He donated \$100 million to a University of Utah Cancer Institute. The focus of research is the genetic cause of cancer and there is a link with the two forces that drive this man: his family and his religion. The institute is making use of the vast resources of the Mormon church's genealogical library to trace genetic histories. It is a link that must trouble the plastics tycoon. Both of his parents died of cancer and Huntsman himself has battled with prostate and mouth cancer.

Huntsman seems determined to pass on his vast empire to his grandchildren but a much better legacy for him would be a cure for the disease that has afflicted his family. Where Mr Kaletsky went wrong, however, was in drawing a parallel between the present strength of the pound, despite successive cuts in UK interest rates, based on the "high level of worldwide confidence in British economic management and political stability", on the one hand, and the pound's previous strength in the late 1980s, prior to its entry into the European exchange-rate mechanism, following the exorbitantly high interest rates needed to curb the Lawson boom's inflationary excesses, on the other.

Euro and UK interest rates

From Mr Walter Grey

Sir, Anatole Kaletsky (*Economic View*, April 13) rightly took Wim Duisenberg, President of the European Central Bank, to task not only for gratuitously foreclosing an option by publicly promising no further cut in euro interest rates, but above all for disdaining any kind of "contra-cyclical" or "cyclically oriented" monetary policy, when maintenance of price stability by means of a counter-cyclical interest rate cycle, or a policy of constantly leaning against the wind, in fact represents anyone's best hope of banishing the economic (boom-bust) cycle at last.

Where Mr Kaletsky went wrong, however, was in drawing a parallel between the present strength of the pound, despite successive cuts in UK interest rates, based on the "high level of worldwide confidence in British economic management and political stability", on the one hand, and the pound's previous strength in the late 1980s, prior to its entry into the European exchange-rate mechanism, following the exorbitantly high interest rates needed to curb the Lawson boom's inflationary excesses, on the other.

There being no true analogy between those two positions, and given the striking difference made by Britain's new, stability-oriented fiscal as well as monetary policy regimes, Mr Kaletsky's conclusion that, in coming months, "the difference between British and European interest rates will widen" to the detriment of the convergence needed for the pound's eventual entry into the euro, seems far from certain.

Yours faithfully, WALTER GREY, 12 Arden Road, Finchley N3 3AN.

Paris match

THE big City law firms are under attack in Paris for their habit of poaching senior locals for salaries undreamt of in French legal circles. This process has been going on for some time as Anglo-Saxon firms move into Europe but matters have come to a head with a series of high-profile hirings.

The French are accusing the Brits of anything from commercial imperialism to being obsessed with money and unconcerned with the damage they are doing to the legal system. *Gide Loyrette Nouel*, France's biggest practice, has already abandoned a ten-year

link with our own Allen & Overy in protest.

Now the French firm, smarting from the latest defection of two partners to Linklaters & Paines's burgeoning pan-European venture, has called a crisis meeting of senior staff to decide what can be done.

The meeting did come up with one firm resolution. A senior partner at Gide was asked to resign. So that's how you deal with staff defections.

I HEAR Michael Hardern, the increasingly eccentric scourge of the mutuals, was thrown out of the Soho branch of Barclays Bank yesterday for causing trouble.

Hardern was later heard to tell listeners at the Portland Building Society meeting that he was told to leave — after he went up to the counter and demanded to be made Barclays's new chief executive.

Uplifting

AS THE merger with Deutsche Bank nears, the top brass at Bankers Trust get sillier and sillier. A while back staff were solemnly instructed on how to address Germans.



Now a bizarre questionnaire has arrived by e-mail.

Staff are asked about their personal tastes. Favourite songs, old movies, pets — but it gets worse. "Most interesting view from your desk" and "favourite desk ornament", for example. And how about "standard elevator greeting"? As in "Hello, lift!" I suppose.

I ask my informant what sort of person spends their time thinking up such rubbish. "God only knows, but the terrifying thing is they and their kind are taking over."

EARLIER this week I reproduced a paragraph of gibberish with which the organisers chose to promote National Construction Week. I hear the launch yesterday was equally

fraught with trouble for the rear cleavage brigade. They couldn't work the high-tech screen, and anyway someone had forgotten to rewind the video of John Prescott's prepared speech.

So Nick Raynsford, Construction Minister, decided to take questions. As he started, the head of Prescott appeared on the screen and bellowed: "Good morning." At which, Raynsford commented wryly: "Ah! His Master's voice."

Driven away

SIMON FREAKLEY, senior partner of corporate undertakers Buchler Phillips, has long boosted his street credibility by living in Peckham. After 12 years of slumming it, he recently decided to go up in the world and moved to South Kensington.

Two weeks later his Mercedes, which had survived unmolested in Peckham, was stolen.

IF YOU have tears to shed, shed them for Ronald Dillon, director of international operations at COLT Telecom, who does not seem to have appreciated the high regard the stock market has for his company.

The accounts show that he exercised options and then sold 160,000 shares at about £2.60 in February last year. Earlier

this year the price peaked at well over £13. He could have made an extra £1.7 million.

Rabbit stew

MORE tears, for the unnamed owners of the rabbit cruelly slain by Transco, the gas pipeline business. This sensitive bunny keeled over and died of a heart attack after workmen started drilling in its road.

The company offered to replace the rabbit but the owner went to the Gas Consumers Council and claimed for the vet's fees and other expenses. If it died of a heart attack, though, why did they need a vet?

MARTIN WALLER
citydiary@the-times.co.uk



Rabbits: sensitive to gas



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Second-liners show gains

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

1999	Low Company	Price	Chg	%	PA	1999	Low Company	Price	Chg	%	PA	
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES												
615	446 Allied Breweries	485	-	7	6.3	116	75	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
616	441 272-Brewery	323	-	16	46	147	76	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
742	526	689	-	17	2.8	164	77	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
743	526	689	-	17	2.8	164	78	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
744	526	689	-	17	2.8	164	79	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
745	526	689	-	17	2.8	164	80	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
746	526	689	-	17	2.8	164	81	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
747	526	689	-	17	2.8	164	82	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
748	526	689	-	17	2.8	164	83	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
749	526	689	-	17	2.8	164	84	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
750	526	689	-	17	2.8	164	85	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
BANKS												
1418	1146-Aldi	138	-	2	29	164	75	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
1421	1226 Albany Bank	1416	-	7	2.5	195	76	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
1422	1226 Albany Bank	1416	-	7	2.5	195	77	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
1423	1226 Albany Bank	1416	-	7	2.5	195	78	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
1424	1226 Albany Bank	1416	-	7	2.5	195	79	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
1425	1226 Albany Bank	1416	-	7	2.5	195	80	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
1426	1226 Albany Bank	1416	-	7	2.5	195	81	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
1427	1226 Albany Bank	1416	-	7	2.5	195	82	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
1428	1226 Albany Bank	1416	-	7	2.5	195	83	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
1429	1226 Albany Bank	1416	-	7	2.5	195	84	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
1430	1226 Albany Bank	1416	-	7	2.5	195	85	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
BREWERIES, PUBS & REST												
381	260 Asa-Sears	367	-	4	3	87	75	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
382	260 Asa-Sears	367	-	4	3	87	76	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
383	260 Asa-Sears	367	-	4	3	87	77	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
384	260 Asa-Sears	367	-	4	3	87	78	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
385	260 Asa-Sears	367	-	4	3	87	79	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
386	260 Asa-Sears	367	-	4	3	87	80	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
387	260 Asa-Sears	367	-	4	3	87	81	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
388	260 Asa-Sears	367	-	4	3	87	82	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
389	260 Asa-Sears	367	-	4	3	87	83	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
390	260 Asa-Sears	367	-	4	3	87	84	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
391	260 Asa-Sears	367	-	4	3	87	85	3-Edwards Mills	275	-	108	57
BUILDING MATERIALS												
81	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	75					
82	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	76					
83	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	77					
84	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	78					
85	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	79					
86	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	80					
87	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	81					
88	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	82					
89	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	83					
90	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	84					
91	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	85					
92	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	86					
93	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	87					
94	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	88					
95	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	89					
96	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	90					
97	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	91					
98	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	92					
99	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	93					
100	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	94					
101	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	95					
102	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	96					
103	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	97					
104	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	98					
105	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	99					
106	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	100					
107	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	101					
108	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	102					
109	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	103					
110	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	104					
111	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	105					
112	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	106					
113	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	107					
114	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	108					
115	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	109					
116	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	110					
117	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	111					
118	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	112					
119	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	113					
120	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	114					
121	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	115					
122	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	116					
123	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	117					
124	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	118					
125	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	119					
126	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	120					
127	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	121					
128	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	122					
129	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	123					
130	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	124					
131	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	125					
132	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	126					
133	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	127					
134	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	128					
135	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	129					
136	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	130					
137	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	131					
138	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	132					
139	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	133					
140	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	134					
141	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	135					
142	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	136					
143	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	137					
144	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	138					
145	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	139					
146	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	140					
147	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	141					
148	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	142					
149	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	143					
150	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	144					
151	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	145					
152	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	146					
153	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	147					
154	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	148					
155	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	149					
156	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	150					
157	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	151					
158	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	152					
159	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	153					
160	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	154					
161	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	155					
162	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	156					
163	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	157					
164	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	158					
165	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	159					
166	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	160					
167	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	161					
168	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	162					
169	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	163					
170	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	164					
171	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	165					
172	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	166					
173	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	167					
174	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	168					
175	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	169					
176	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	170					
177	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	171					
178	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	172					
179	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	173					
180	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	174					
181	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	175					
182	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	176					
183	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	177					
184	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	178					
185	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	179					
186	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	180					
187	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	181					
188	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	182					
189	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	183					
190	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	184					
191	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	185					
192	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	186					
193	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	187					
194	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	188					
195	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	189					
196	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	190					
197	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	191					
198	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	192					
199	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	193					
200	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	194					
201	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	195					
202	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	196					
203	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27	172	197					
204	62 Aciplex Interiors	76	-	1	27</							

1999 Low Company Price +/- % P/E					1999 Low Company Price +/- % P/E					1999 Low Company Price +/- % P/E					1999 Low Company Price +/- % P/E					
212	BNI	104.7	+13.1	16	139	44	35	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
213	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	140	36	36	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
214	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	141	37	37	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
215	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	142	38	38	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
216	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	143	39	39	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
217	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	144	40	40	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
218	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	145	41	41	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
219	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	146	42	42	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
220	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	147	43	43	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
221	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	148	44	44	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
222	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	149	45	45	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
223	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	150	46	46	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
224	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	151	47	47	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
225	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	152	48	48	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
226	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	153	49	49	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
227	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	154	50	50	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
228	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	155	51	51	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
229	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	156	52	52	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
230	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	157	53	53	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
231	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	158	54	54	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
232	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	159	55	55	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
233	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	160	56	56	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
234	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	161	57	57	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
235	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	162	58	58	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
236	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	163	59	59	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
237	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	164	60	60	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
238	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	165	61	61	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
239	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	166	62	62	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
240	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	167	63	63	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
241	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	168	64	64	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
242	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	169	65	65	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
243	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	170	66	66	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
244	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	171	67	67	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
245	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	172	68	68	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
246	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	173	69	69	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
247	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	174	70	70	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
248	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	175	71	71	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
249	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	176	72	72	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
250	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	177	73	73	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
251	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	178	74	74	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
252	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	179	75	75	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
253	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	180	76	76	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
254	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	181	77	77	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
255	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	182	78	78	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
256	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	183	79	79	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
257	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	184	80	80	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
258	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	185	81	81	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
259	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	186	82	82	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
260	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	187	83	83	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
261	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	188	84	84	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
262	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	189	85	85	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
263	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	190	86	86	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
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270	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	197	93	93	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
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272	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	199	95	95	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
273	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	200	96	96	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
274	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	201	97	97	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
275	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	202	98	98	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
276	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	203	99	99	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
277	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	204	100	100	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
278	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	205	101	101	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
279	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	206	102	102	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
280	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	207	103	103	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
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286	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	213	109	109	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
287	BNP	54.1	+10.2	3	214	110	110	Corstia Gas	394	72	57	Marathon Petroleum	67	41	70	22	22	Marathon Petroleum	67	41
288	BNP																			

1999	Inc. Company	Price	% Chg.	PE	Mkt. Cap.	Company	Price	% Chg.	PE		
47	31	40	35	37	115	71	108	110	63	21	
48	32	41	36	38	116	72	109	111	64	22	
49	33	42	37	39	117	73	110	112	65	23	
50	34	43	38	40	118	74	111	113	66	24	
51	35	44	39	41	119	75	112	114	67	25	
52	36	45	40	42	120	76	113	115	68	26	
53	37	46	41	43	121	77	114	116	69	27	
54	38	47	42	44	122	78	115	117	70	28	
55	39	48	43	45	123	79	116	118	71	29	
56	40	49	44	46	124	80	117	119	72	30	
57	41	50	45	47	125	81	118	120	73	31	
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61	45	54	49	51	129	85	122	124	77	35	
62	46	55	50	52	130	86	123	125	78	36	
63	47	56	51	53	131	87	124	126	79	37	
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90	74	83	78	80	158	114	151	153	106	64	
91	75	84	79	81	159	115	152	154	107	65	
92	76	85	80	82	160	116	153	155	108	66	
93											
PRINTING & PAPER											
325	355	APR	342	35	39	90	355	APR	342	35	39
326	356	APR	343	36	40	91	356	APR	344	37	40
327	357	APR	344	37	41	92	357	APR	345	38	41
328	358	APR	345	38	42	93	358	APR	346	39	42
329	359	APR	346	39	43	94	359	APR	347	40	43
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331	361	APR	348	41	45	96	361	APR	349	42	45
332	362	APR	349	42	46	97	362	APR	350	43	46
333	363	APR	350	43	47	98	363	APR	351	44	47
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335	365	APR	352	45	49	100	365	APR	353	46	49
336	366	APR	353	46	50	101	366	APR	354	47	50
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346	376	APR	363	56	60	111	376	APR	364	57	60
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357	387	APR	374	67	71	122	387	APR	375	68	71
358	388	APR	375	68	72	123	388	APR	376	69	72
359	389	APR	376	69	73	124	389	APR	377	70	73
360	390	APR	377	70	74	125	390	APR	378	71	74
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362	392	APR	379	72	76	127	392	APR	380	73	76
363	393	APR	380	73	77	128	393	APR	381	74	77
364	394	APR	381	74	78	129	394	APR	382	75	78
365	395	APR	382	75	79	130	395	APR	383	76	79
366	396	APR	383	76	80	131	396	APR	384	77	80
367	397	APR	384	77	81	132	397	APR	385	78	81
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380	410	APR	397	90	94	145	410	APR	398	91	94
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385	415	APR	402	95	99	150	415	APR	403	96	99
386	416	APR	403	96	100	151	416	APR	404	97	100
387	417	APR	404	97	101	152	417	APR	405	98	101
388	418	APR	405	98	102	153	418	APR	406	99	102
389	419	APR	406	99	103	154	419	APR	407	100	103
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408	438	APR	425	118	122	173	438	APR	426	119	122
409	439	APR	426	119	123	174	439	APR	427	120	123
410	440	APR	427	120	124	175	440	APR	428	121	124
411	441	APR	428	121	125	176	441	APR	429	122	125
412	442	APR	429	122	126	177					

Forget the steak, we're sold on the sizzle

In showbiz, to adapt the old song, it's not what you do, it's the way that you sell it. At least, that is the implication of some just-released statistics detailing the startling sums spent by Hollywood studios on promoting their movies during 1998. Of course it's no secret that film moguls subscribe to the old maxim: "You have to spend a buck to make a buck." What's surprising — and, to their midget-sized would-be competitors on this side of the Atlantic, possibly terrifying — is just how many bucks they are prepared to spend to honour the great god Hype.

Disney led the field, spending a massive \$323 million in 1998 on promoting its films just inside America. Warner Bros wasn't far behind, at \$268 million. Hollywood as a whole spent \$2 billion on marketing films in the US. Worldwide, however, the figure may be twice that. Indeed, the Motion Picture Association of America tells us that the average advertising budget of a single Hollywood movie is now a staggering \$25.3 million.

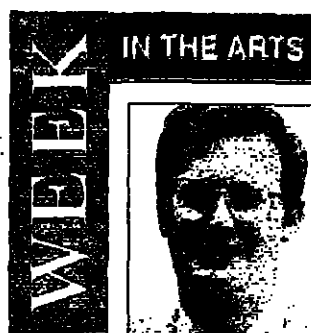
Three points occur to me —

apart, that is, from the mean-spirited thought that if there is one profession more sickeningly overpaid than m'learned friends at the Bar, it is m'learned friends in the advertising industry. But I digress. The first point is that the disparity between what Hollywood spends on selling its movies and what is available to British producers is now so huge as to be unbridgeable. That is why the most successful "British" movies — British in cast, crew, production and concept — turn out to be American-financed, with all the profits flowing back west.

In short, it isn't the cost of making films that is prohibitive to us; it's the cost of persuading punters to view them. That point still hasn't percolated through to those (notably HM Government) who naively imagine that the lottery will bankroll a renaissance in British film. What the lottery is bankrolling is a plethora of underpromoted efforts

that will mostly come and go without rippling the surface of public consciousness. Many won't be screened at all, for cinema managers are increasingly reluctant to screen films that aren't turbo-propelled into prominence by stonking great advertising campaigns.

The second point is that Hollywood's vast promotion budget doesn't just buy advertising space. It also buys favourable coverage. I don't mean that journalists are blatantly corrupt. Perish the thought! But nice little inducements are on hand — facilities trips to exotic locations, "access" to stars in plush, far-away hotels — for hacks who produce the correct sort of golly-gosh puffery. It all helps to keep the hype wagon rolling merrily along — and to marginalise proper film criticism. That is a state of affairs which newspapers must ponder hard if they want intelligent readers to trust their film coverage.



RICHARD MORRISON

And the final point? It is that Hollywood's gargantuan publicity machines don't just put pressure on other film-makers. They impinge on all art forms. Theatres, orchestras, galleries, restaurants, opera houses: all must compete to win what hip American economists call "the leisure dollar". I don't know

about you, but I have only a finite amount of leisure dollars, and a great many of them seem to end up in the small but tenacious hands of my children — who then part with them (it seems to me) entirely in accordance with the dictates of the newest Hollywood hype to hit the hoardings of Hendon. This is a process that is repeated in millions of households across the world. No wonder that serious culture is struggling to be noticed.

What's to be done? Well, we could educate our children to marvel at the subtle intricacies of music, painting and drama, to form their own cultural tastes and not be swayed by global assaults of hyperbolic tripe. To be actively creative and not passively consumerist. But that does not seem to fit in with Mr Blunkett's educational priorities. So onwards the Hollywood publicity machines roll: awesome, ubiquitous, irresistible. I'm not bitter

about it — just bemused that, in an age when people strive so hard to assert their individuality in other ways, a small bunch of impresarios in Los Angeles has apparently found the key that unlocks the herd instinct in the whole of mankind.

Meanwhile, up at the intellectual end of Hollywood, I see that the producers of that estimable TV series *Baywatch* have decided to transfer their delightful diversions to Hawaii. The Pacific paradise has apparently just pipped Australia to the prize of hosting this seminal cultural icon of the late 20th century.

It's very sad. If the beach babes with the bouncing bountiful had to be transferred at all from their native habitat of southern California, my secret hope was that our own gorgeously endowed Culture Secretary would have induced

them to settle in one of Britain's glamorous resorts. After *Baywatch*, why not *Herne Bay Watch*? It makes sense. Wasn't Chris Smith complaining recently that British soap operas are so dowdy to interest the rest of the world?

My preference would have been Cromer. True, the Norfolk resort is not noted for sun or surf, let alone silicone implants. And a few minor costume changes would have been required — namely the replacing of thimble-sized swimsuits with the anoraks and thermal trousers traditionally sported on British beaches in midsummer. But think of the storylines if *Baywatch*'s tawdry life-guarders were relocated to the cafe on Cromer Pier! Why, the show could even be retitled *Traywatch*.

Oh well, it's too late now. The producers have opted for Hawaii, where doubtless the plots will disintegrate into dreary processions of practically naked young women, 100mph car chases and underwater harpoon fights with savage packs of sharks. I doubt very much whether I shall watch after the first 35 or 40 episodes.

Deep pain in the rainforest

If you were asked to cite an instance of personal trauma transmuted into terrific drama, you would very likely come up with a play or plays by the mad, misogynistic Strindberg or the stricken O'Neill; but, as Sean Mathias's fine revival proves, Tennessee Williams's relatively obscure *Suddenly Last Summer* would make an impressive answer.

At the Comedy the piece occurs in a jungle in which giant arthropods appear to be copulating with twisted sea-urchins and vast Venus fly-traps with scorpions; and the jungle is not only Tim Hatley's imaginative idea of a garden in neo-Gothic New Orleans, but Williams's head as he felt it and Williams's world as he saw it.

Back in 1957 Williams wrote the play against his shrink's advice while in mid-therapy; and he packed it with key obsessions. He always felt that his prim Southern mother had destroyed his troubled sister, allowing her to be lobotomised simply to silence the obscenities she sometimes uttered. And here is Violet Venable, in Sheila Gish's chilling performance: a pale, chilled, ginger-wigged blend of matriarchal vulture, antique belle and stony Medusa, insisting that a pioneering young surgeon grab her niece, Rachel Weisz's

THEATRE

Catharine, and "cut this hideous story out of her brain".

And what's the hideous, obscene story? Well, it involves the death of Violet's cooed son Sebastian, a poet who shared restlessness, promiscuity, even a growing taste for young blond men with Williams himself. Last summer his self-destructiveness led to his destruction, as the dramatist's friends feared would be the case with him. Catharine's wits have been churned by seeing his awful end, and his mother is willing to use bribes, blackmail, anything to ensure she can never again describe it.

The dramatic tension comes from two obvious sources. What happened that grim day in distant Cabeza de Lobo, and will Violet's wealth combine with the self-interest of Catharine's boorish family to prevent the facts emerging? But what keeps you spellbound is surely the quality of Williams's writing. There are two long monologues almost unmatched in drama for poetic power. First, Gish makes you

feel the terror of the bleak volcanic island where she and Sebastian coolly watched killer-birds devouring newly hatched turtles as they ran to the sea. Then, Weisz vividly relives the white-hot afternoon in the white-painted town where the white-suited Sebastian was — well, let's just say that Williams came up with an extreme metaphor for atonement as even his sense of guilt could concoct.

Sebastian, who never appears, sounds spoilt, greedy, even depraved, but unflinching in his quest for truth. Yet you never feel that Williams is merely confessing his own sins or analysing his personal psychopathology.

"It's a true story of our time and the world we live in," declares Weisz; and you believe her. Partly that is because she effectively transforms herself from a baffled human butterfly, crying "you want to bore a hole in my skull and turn a knife in my brain" as she flutters round the Venable rainforest, into a witness who blends quiet intensity with authority. But mainly it is because Williams had the human sympathy and metaphysical scope to look cruelty in the face — and make an unforgettable parable out of pain.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE



'Feeling Southern discomfort: Sheila Gish (Violet Venable) and Rachel Weisz (Catharine) with Gerard Butler as Dr Sugar in *Suddenly Last Summer*

A war without peace

This new play by Goran Stefanovski could hardly come at a more poignant time. Set both in London — where Stefanovski, one of the leading playwrights of the former Yugoslavia, is now permanently resident — and a bombed-out Sarajevo, it paints a stark picture of the suffering inflicted on the soul as well as the body when a community is rent by civil war.

At its centre is Sara (Madlena Nedeva), a political asylum-seeker who wanders distraught and exhausted into a London shelter. There she is tended to by an eccentric assortment of misfits and victims, themselves trying to retain some dignity in the face of their own small privations and humiliations.

In her troubled sleep these new faces merge with memories of her former friends in Sarajevo, suffering and standing firm together as their city is ravaged around them. Rudy, the petty tyrant of a caretaker (a suitably smiling John O'Mahony), likewise mutates into her former lover, subsequently one of Sarajevo's de-



Nightmares Madlena Nedeva and John O'Mahony

stroyers and the cause of her exile.

Counterpointing the two locations and the daily indignities inflicted both on refugee

and homeless suggests that, given the chance, atrocities can happen anywhere. Stefanovski finds many moving moments. "I didn't know I had a nation till all this started. Now it's your nation against mine," says Sara to her estranged lover. The precious seconds of normal life snatched amid a background of ever-present fear — a birthday picnic is brutally disrupted by gunfire — are brushed in with a delicate wash of melancholy joy.

But for all the play's nightmare-ridden depiction of painful memories filtered through a haze of suffering, its characters' stories are enigmatic bordering on the opaque, which tends to confuse unnecessarily. And while no one can doubt the almost painful pertinence of the play's admonitions about repeating the mistakes of the past, I have to say, too, that I found it all too portentous and over-larded with symbolism to be really dramatically involving.

Theatre Melange's tightly choreographed production tells the story with dance, song and poetry as well as a score for percussion by Xun Yin Dong, who adds in atmospheric effects on hauntingly shivering xylophone and warlike drums. The ensemble cast deliver their lines with a rap, incantatory intensity.

This heightened, non-naturalistic style certainly suits the play. But it is not strongly physical or visual enough to add much meat to its meaning, and so is sometimes in danger of looking merely affected.

NIGEL CLIFF

As a creator of theatrical spectacle Paul Kerryson, the Haymarket's artistic director for most of this decade, has few equals. The large stage provides him with a grand setting for musicals, but with the far smaller cast of Webster's gory tragedy he sensitively uses the depths of space to enhance relationships, or against a great sweep of certain places one actor to emphasise isolation.

His designer here is Emma Donovan, who creates at the rear of the stage an ecclesiastical facade above a flight of steps, able to serve as the background to a street scene, a courtroom or the interior of the Vatican. Jenny Cane (lighting designer) pierces the space with overhead lights diffused through mist, and in the sinister magic show directs white and red beams from below the stage, past the face of bad Lord Brachiano until they are lost in the murk above. Even in the

Revenge of a she-devil

second half, when the plotting becomes over-complicated, the sequence of spectacular tableaux continues to the end.

T.S. Eliot famously decided that Webster "was much possessed by death" and ten characters do die onstage. But what the performance by Kerryson's cast brings out yet more clearly is Webster's neurotic fear of women. All the bad characters are worse than Victoria, the "white devil" of the title, yet anyone who wants to attack her, whether she be brother, lover, mother, servant, duke, lawyer or cardinal, delves deep into their mental dictionaries of sexual abuse and hurts the worst at her.

Of course her principal crime is that she fights back. Gabrielle Drake brings to the role a languorous, confident,



mischievous smile, and how sweetly, as Brachiano says, she speaks her artful dream inciting him to murder. But when brought before the Cardinal's court she will not be

cowed, and Drake masterfully charts her artful course between outrage and appeal.

The misogyny is underlined by the glimpse Kerryson gives us of a youth in some undress wandering through the Cardinal's apartments, and by a smoothly spoken performance from David Leonard as His Eminence, fond of turning on his heel so that his long skirts

swirl. Claude Close makes a strongly authoritative Duke of Florence, memorably aghast at the news of his sister's death, and Richard Willis is a blunt, bold Brachiano.

Ian Pepperell looks mean and mercurial as Victoria's malcontent brother Flamino, although it is not easy to pick a way through the zigzags of his plotting. However, there is energy in the production, though some pruning of the rhetoric would be a good thing.

JEREMY KINGSTON

Skip and hop

Dumped, the first half of the National Youth Theatre's three-hour marathon at the Battersea Arts Centre, is a new play by Daragh Carville set in Belfast. *Nigel Cliff* writes. More precisely, it is set in a skip. Living in the skip is Franco, a self-styled comedian who has been dumped (geddit?) by his girlfriend Julie. Franco thinks that taking up residence among other unwanted objects is just the sort of witty pun likely to win her back.

Unfortunately, the skip has already been claimed by local crusty Nick. Fortunately, Nick is desperate to be funny, so in return for some coaching he promises to help Franco to win his girlfriend back. They both fail. That's it.

You can imagine Carville being so pleased with the dumped-skip joke that he decided to weave a whole play around it. Predictably, the result is contrived. Most of the characters — Julie, her new



marketing consultant boyfriend David and Nick's grumpy girlfriend Liz — wander on and off for no very good reason and to little effect.

There are a few flashes of wit and some sparky repartee between Sam Riley as Franco and Christopher Campbell as Nick. And there is a point lurking somewhere: that going through life delivering faintly amusing monologues is not a recipe for happiness. The performances are all enjoyable, but the young cast does not have quite enough confident charm to lift this material.

Kissing Angels, a devised piece by Maggie Kinloch, Peter Collins and the company, is more rewarding. Its cast of 21 split and reform into small groups, each representing a different type — the hard-drinking male student, the party girl, the keen-as-mustard middle-management trainee, the wife-beating factory worker and the lonely old grannie.

It all adds up to a thorough trawl through teenage anxieties and the need for freedom with nurture. There is some alarmingly high-flown stuff about being kissed by an angel and the like, but the ensemble acting is vivacious and well-honed, and the production whirls along.

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POP OPINION

Sweden does it again

ARTS

JAZZ ALBUMS

A new Branford Marsalis

It's tough at the top, as the Cardigans are discovering. But exhaustion won't stop the biggest Swedes since Abba

Losing their favourite game?

Pop music has always thrived on culture clashes. And, after taking one look at the Cardigans' dressing rooms at *Top of the Pops*, you immediately understand why the Swedish five-piece have been quietly knocking out some of the past two summers' most perfect pop. The boys' room is a student's bedsit via Calcutta: trousers and guitars all over the floor; the drummer asleep on the bursting sofa; and 12 congealing curries lying untouched on the table. The whole room mingles of turmeric, cigarettes and sweat.

The dressing room of the Cardigans' lead singer, Nina Persson, on the other hand, is like an Estée Lauder clinic: diffused lighting, a bunch of lilies on the table, and approximately all the make-up in the world laid neatly out in front of a huge bulb-framed mirror. It's like stepping from a Third World shed into the Light.

And yet, when the band leave their respective bolt-holes and symbolically come together in the roaring smoky joy of the *Top of the Pops* bar, it becomes apparent things are a little more complicated than that. Persson turns out to have a thing for stinky old bikers' trousers, while her co-songwriter, Peter Svensson, is a fluffy, unashamed romantic who believes that love "can make you a better person".

"Hmmm. I've learnt you can never change people," Persson counters, gimlet-eyed, staring morosely into her mineral water. "You end up exhausted, and the other person ends up bitter." A small, sad silence descends on the Cardigans' table.

The band have just come off a month-long tour of America. Ever since the dizzy, dandelion fluff of *Lovefool* ("Love me, love me/Say that you love me") was featured in the Leonardo DiCaprio vehicle *Romeo + Juliet* and sold more than



CAITLIN MORAN

three million copies worldwide, the Cardigans have been caught up in global schedule exhaustion. This touring-induced nihilism becomes apparent on listening to their post-*Lovefool* album, *Gran Turismo*: a sleek, hard-edged thing made for driving, neon and the kind of despair you don't have time to attend to. Both *My Favourite Game* and *Erase/Rewind*, two more recent singles, have had the metallic tang of stadiums about them. It's Ingmar Bergman dressing Garbage in steel. Lovely stuff.

However, as a consequence of *Lovefool* and the subsequent darker album, the Cardigans have been interviewed for a year and a half on the basis of two questions: "What's Leonardo DiCaprio like?" and "So, you want to kill yourselves?" This is why they are slumped around the bar table like caged animals waiting to be bored senseless.

So, having gathered they couldn't give a finker's cuss for DiCaprio, and aren't planning to off themselves immediately — they're on *Top of the Pops* in 30 minutes — it feels like an appropriate time to deploy my greatest band-livening weapon: the Trousers Question.

"How much would I be prepared to spend on a really lovely pair of trousers?" Persson repeats, bemused. "Well, I actually was al-

most prepared to pay \$1,200. They were beautiful!" She has the dreamy look a woman gets on her face when her brain has just turned into a catalogue. "Stitched leather with a crusader cross on each thigh. I'm not sure I would ever have worn them — I think I would have just hung them on the wall. They were wonderful, weren't they?" Svensson nods. The entire band were obviously overcome by the magnificence of the trousers.

"I think I prefer biker trousers, though," Persson leans back in her chair. "Real dirty padded biker trousers. Ones that make your ass look terribly huge, so you look like a hillbilly, you look like an elk."

Well, it's not every day you learn that one of the most lusted-after women in pop knows what an elk's bottom looks like in leather biker trousers. But then, it sounds as if you have to make your own amusement in the Cardigans' home town of Jönköping, a town so catastrophically dull that its only notable feature is its 52 churches, situated in a country so deathly quiet that even royalty is reputed to go on awesome benders to relieve the tedium.

"I felt quite patriotic when I heard that," Svensson beams.

So, you're looking forward to getting home? "Well, kind of," Svensson replies. "But on the other hand, I worked out yesterday that if we carry on doing as well as we are, I can probably afford to retire in five years. And I don't want to. I want to carry on for ever."

I look around at the rest of the band slumped around the table, knackered and depressed. "Hey, you guys," I snitch. "Peter wants to carry on for ever."

"But of course," Persson says, looking puzzled. "So do we."

● The Cardigans play Glasgow Barrowlands on April 27; Manchester Academy (April 28); London Albert Hall (April 29); Belfast Botanical Gardens (May 2); Dublin Castle (May 3)



OK, everybody, ask the Cardigans what Leonardo DiCaprio is like, and why they want to kill themselves. Go on — they love being asked that

A breathless hush in the close

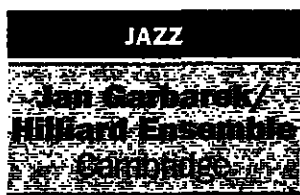
The pairing of a jazz saxophonist with a classical vocal group might once have seemed like a mischievous conceit. But, with the remarkable success of *Officium* in 1994, Jan Garbarek and the Hilliard Ensemble turned an eccentric thought into a self-evident truth. And now, five years on, they have reunited to give the European premiere of a new work, entitled *Mnemosyne*.

The basic formula remains the same: the willowy interweaving of four male voices with soprano and tenor sax. But where *Officium* drew its material from a relatively narrow place and time, *Mnemosyne* draws from a time-span of a hundred years before the birth of Christ to the present day, from Estonian lullabies to Basque folk-songs. And where before it was only the Norwegian saxophonist Jan Garbarek who improvised, this time the Hilliard Ensemble occasionally extemporise too.

Despite these innovations, the result is similar: a drifting, shimmering soundscape. This is not music bent upon making a specific point: it is music intent upon creating an effect. And these effects are sometimes spectacularly beautiful, particularly when the performers use the acoustics of the

building, making King's College Chapel a sixth instrument. At one point, counter-tenor David James left the platform and began to move through the audience, singing as he went. Voices and sax began a disembodied conversation, which ebbed and flowed across the audience.

There were several moments like this, when the com-



binations of musical genres made a perfect but surprising sense, moments when the sound was more than the sum of its parts: the rumbling voices and lilting saxophone that opened the concert, and the glorious extended fade-out that ended it.

But there were other times when it was the components, rather than the whole, that caught the attention. These occurred when the singers and the saxophonist were playing to different rules. Sometimes Garbarek's interjections seemed to be offering a cheeky commentary on the Hilliard Ensemble's formal performance; on other occasions his

flurry of notes seemed to tug and pull impatiently at the constraints which bound the singers. It was almost as if Garbarek was offering the subconscious subject to the singing, revealing the emotional upheaval below the ordered surface.

You felt that the Hilliards should fight back, should lift their voices in response. But even in their restrained, respectful formality, these moments produced a sound which had a sinewy grace and elegance, and which fully justified this still surprising alliance.

JOHN STREET

DAVID SINGHAR



Jan Garbarek (left) and the Hilliard Ensemble renew their acquaintance and bridge a few more musical chasms

With little in common besides the fact that each has recently won jazz's most prestigious award, Denmark's Jazzpar Prize, the French pianist Martial Solal and US guitarist Jim Hall constituted a pleasantly varied double bill, the former all virtuosic wit and impish charm, the latter all subtlety and easy grace.

Solal came to international jazz prominence the old-fashioned way: by slowly building a reputation courtesy of his club work in Paris from the late 1940s onwards, backing visiting and expatriate Americans such as Don Byas, Lucky Thompson and Sidney Bechet as well as locals like Django Reinhardt. Such experience has made his approach to standards utterly individual: *Here's That Rainy Day* became a stately but discursive meander with frequent detours; *Summertime* was handled in pass-the-parcel fashion, the tricky improvisation begun by Solal, then moving to bassist François Moutin before being taken up by drummer Louis Moutin.

A solo *Caravan*, delightfully fragmented, provided a fascinating contrast with the ram-bunctious tour de force it used to become in the late Michel Petrucci's hands; *Satin Doll* again relied heavily on the Moutins taking the improviser's baton smoothly from Solal. Leavened with some typically idiosyncratic Solal originals, this was a wholly accessible yet dense and rich trio set packed with dry humour but performed with great brio.

Jim Hall, by contrast, conceals rather than parades his art. On first acquaintance, his solos sound almost hesitant —

Martial arts and craft

the tonal distortion, flamboyant runs and power chords of many contemporary electric guitarists form no part of his musical vocabulary — but then Hall's catchphrase has always been "Listening is the

key", and some of his most telling playing occurs almost unheard, behind others' soloing. Chris Potter, on tenor, proved the perfect foil in this respect, building his warm, smoky solos carefully and thoughtfully, feeding off Hall's gentle prompting and lightly but firmly propelled by Scott Colley's agile bass and Terry Clarke's brisk drums.

The band's material — a delicately wafting Brazilian theme, the odd deconstructed standard, a couple of graceful blues and a closing nod to Bill Frisell — may have been relatively unremarkable; the controlled elegance and understated intelligence of its performance, though, were every bit as impressive as the sparkiness and sly ebullience of Solal.

CHRIS PARKER

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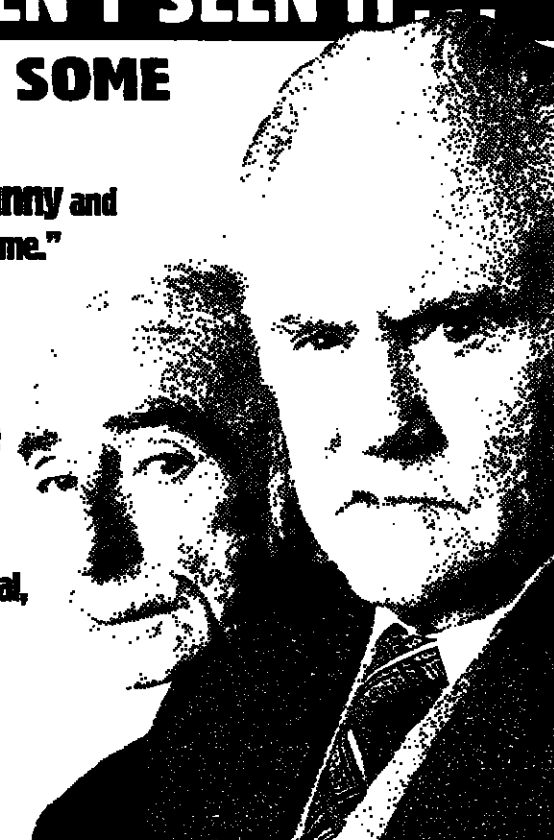
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WAKING NED

AT CINEMAS EVERYWHERE NOW

Out of the shadows

DENYS BAPTISTE

Be Where You Are

(Dune Records DUNECD03)

HAVING spent the past few years lending his rich, powerful tenor sound to the bands of drummer Caroline Taylor and bassist Gary Crosby (both Jazz Jamaica and Nu Troop), not to mention J-Life and the Jazz Warriors, Denys Baptiste was more than ready for *Be Where You Are*, his debut recording as a leader. Chris Parker writes.

This lively album was worth the wait. Baptiste's own compositions range from the appropriately burly *Rollin' Stone*, dedicated to one of his chief influences, to groove music and sensuous ballads that showcase his affecting, warbling sound to perfection.

But he also performs an intriguingly Latinised version of Coltrane's *Naima* and contributes some telling tenor comments to the album's only vocal track, Juliet Roberts's sear-

NEW JAZZ ALBUMS

ing, prayerful visit to Stevie Wonder's *Have a Talk With God*.

With vigorous support from pianist Andrew McCormack, bassist Larry Bartley and drummers Daniel Crosby and Tom Skinner, this album demonstrates why Baptiste has just been chosen to represent the United Kingdom at next month's European Broadcasting Festival.

BRANFORD MARSALIS QUARTET

Requiem

(Columbia 069655 2)

DEDICATED to Branford Marsalis's pianist Kenny Kirkland, whose sudden death left this album unfinished (although the unavoidable use of first takes gives it a pleasingly informal feel throughout), *Requiem* is the American tenor

player's first quartet outing since he recorded *Crazy People Music*.

Those expecting the hectic, tumbling rumbustiousness of much of that album, however, will be surprised by the overall tone of this later recording, since much of it is inspired by the work of one of Marsalis's favourite musicians, Keith Jarrett. Alongside the floating Jarrett tribute *Lykief* and the slow-building Paul Motian theme *Trieste* there are flashes of the roilingly intense Marsalis quartet of old, drummer Jeff "Tain" Watts in particular throwing "a bucket of kerosene into the incinerator" — to use producer Delfeayo Marsalis's memorable phrase — whenever possible.

But generally the considerable excitement generated by the music relies more on the subtlety of group interaction, dynamic and textural contrast, than on the straightforward energy and power of yore.

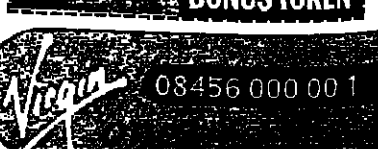


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CHANGING TIMES

POP ALBUMS

And the line up Reef

Cross between

suede

POP ALBUMS

The return of Tom Waits

And the lads line up for a Reef kick

There's a refreshing whiff of the 1970s about Reef — not that the band know it. David Sinclair reports

If the secret of creative success lies in keeping the inner child alive, then Reef are clearly doing better than most. Wandering out one sunny spring morning on to a strip of artificial turf at the back of their North London rehearsal studios, the four musicians come across a gang of scruffy 12-year-old kids kicking a football around.

"Can we join in?" asks Reef's famously long-haired singer Gary Stringer, cheerfully. "Pliss off, hippies," comes the swift reply.

The band take this rebuff philosophically and move on to another group of youngsters, who prove less hostile. And so, for the next half an hour, the 25-year-old Stringer (a supporter of Wolverhampton Wanderers), drummer Dominic Greensmith (28, Ipswich Town), guitarist Kenwyn House (28, Southampton) — "a painful admission", given the club's parlous situation at the bottom of the Premiership) and bass player Jack Bessant (28, non-aligned) charge around the pitch, stripped to the waist, like the overgrown boys they basically still are.

As one of the most obstinate old-school rock'n'roll bands that England has produced in the 1990s — and one of the

most successful — Reef have been called worse than "hippies". Having grown up together in the area around Glastonbury in rural Somerset, they have been portrayed as country bumpkins and are often typecast as heavy-rock neanderthals caught in a

'We've stayed around and we're as respected or disrespected as we ever were'

late-1960s timewarp. But having learnt to roll with the punches, they can now take wry satisfaction in knowing that they have already outlasted many of their more one-fashionable peers.

"What was fashionable when we started out is laughed at now," House says. "We've stayed around and we are as respected or disrespected as we ever were. At least if you are swimming against the tide you're a living fish and not a dead fish."

Having set out their stall in 1995 with a single, *Good Feeling*, which was used as the soundtrack for a TV advertisement for the Sony Minidisc format, Reef enjoyed initial success with their first album, *Replenish*, but truly hit their stride with the follow-up, *Glow*, a platinum-seller (300,000 copies) which topped the British chart two years ago. With hits such as *Place Your Hands* and *Come Back Brighter* they injected a distinctive 1990s swing into a blues-rock tradition associated with bands such as Free, AC/DC and the Rolling Stones. Indeed, as it has often been pointed out, Reef is an anagram of Free.

"Yes, that's right, it is," says Bessant, as if the matter might be in some doubt. "But that had nothing to do with why we chose the name."

This is typical of a curious sense of innocence which the band betray about the historical antecedents of their music. Stringer has heard very little of the Rolling Stones beyond occasional exposure to a greatest hits album belonging to his Dad ("They sound a bit American"). He cites the late Bon Scott as a particular hero, but has not kept tabs on AC/

ARTS

TOMORROW

Hot tickets in Metro



Not for the first time, rock throwbacks Reef — (from left) Gary Stringer, Kenwyn House, Jack Bessant and Dominic Greensmith — form a defensive wall

DC since the Australian singer died in 1980 (when Stringer, incidentally, would have been all of six years old).

The band talk with far more enthusiasm of artists such as Joni Mitchell, Jeff Buckley, Elliott Smith and Stevie Wonder, and while Reef are not about to mutate into a group of sensi-

tive singer-songwriters, it is noticeable that on their third album, *Rides*, they have stretched out in new and sometimes unexpected directions. The current single, *I've Got Something to Say*, which dissolves into a Hey Jude-style singalong at the end, would be an acoustic ballad but for the

wickedly funky drum rhythm, while *Sweetie*, which is mooted as the next single, is a decidedly mellow sort of song driven by acoustic guitars, violin, mandolin, handclaps and a lyric in which Stringer explores his inner feelings of awkwardness in certain social situations: "Often I listen

when people are talking/I don't understand what they mean."

"I love your lyrics, Gary. I think they're fantastic," House says with unvarnished sincerity. "I'm very proud of every word I read on the lyric sheet. People haven't really looked at that. Because if they scratched beneath the surface of Reef's music they'd find some good words."

"Cheers, mate," Stringer says, basking in the midday sun, still shirtless and with his hand shoved, absentmindedly, down the front of his jeans.

But for those who crave the less cerebral pleasures of a raucous voice, a brutal beat and loud guitars wielded with hefty grace then other tracks on *Rides*, such as *New Bird*, *Wandering* and *Back in My Place*, do the trick as well as anything Reef have recorded so far.

They are, it seems, untouched by the usual spiritual and narcotic agonies involved in being "part of the industry of human happiness" (as one-time Stones manager Andrew Loog Oldham called the music

business) and have shown a healthy reluctance to let the demands of the band encroach on their private lives beyond a certain point. Indeed, they have turned down a headlining slot at this year's Glastonbury Festival so that Stringer can attend his brother's wedding in Scotland.

I enjoy going to the Glastonbury Festival more than I do actually playing it," Greensmith says. "Backstage is always really dull and posy and porcey, full of people pretending to have a good time and really not, and looking over their shoulder to see if anyone's looking at them. Whereas if you get out in the crowd and meet all your friends you can have a really good time."

Well, at least no one at Glastonbury is likely to hawl him out for being a hippy.

DAVID SINCLAIR

Cross between Don Quixote and a hoarse

TOM WAITS

Mule Variations

(Anti/Epitaph 6547 2 £15.99)

SDX years since Tom Waits released his last album, *The Black Rider*, his influence pervades the work of such fashionable artists as Beck, Nick Cave, Gomez and PJ Harvey. Even so, few performers are capable of making music with the narrative drive and sense of character that is second nature to Waits, and it is a joy to be able to report the master's return with an album that is on a par with his best work.

Co-produced and mostly co-written with his wife, Kathleen Brennan, *Mule Variations* finds the gravel-voiced storyteller, now 49, combining songs of gruff, romantic yearning with shambling portrayals of bohemian dereliction. On the one hand there is the

bleary chant of the tramp in *Cold Water* "reading the Bible by a 40-watt bulb". At the other end of the spectrum are the gentle, sepia-toned emotions of *Picture in a Frame* and the poignant sense of regret conjured in *House Where Nobody Lives*: "Once it held laughter/Once it held dreams/Did they throw it away/Did they know what it means?"

In between lie shades of sound and emotion, from the tender, Springsteen-esque ballad, *Hold On*, to the spooky *What's He Building?*, a spoken-word evocation of prying-neighbour syndrome narrated

POP ALBUMS

over a patchwork of "found" sounds redolent of the instrument inventor Harry Partch.

With its slightly out-of-tune piano parts and some telling harmonica contributions from Charlie Musselwhite, *Mule Variations* has that marvelous, instantly weathered feel that graces the best blues albums. There is nothing especially new about any of it but, after such a long absence, one is simply grateful to accept as much of this stuff as Waits feels inclined to dish out.

ULTRASOUND

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FLOATED on a wave of self-generated hypebole — "I seriously believe that we are the saviours of rock'n'roll" — Ultrasound follow up their "him

(No 39) single, *Floodlit World*, with a sprawling double-

album debut which suggests there may be something of

promise in store if the band do not buckle under the weight of

their own pretensions.

And excessive weight is

something that Ultrasound's

20-stone singer Andy "Tiny"

Wood knows a bit about. Having

studied together for a music

degree in Newcastle, he and

three other members of the

group have emerged with an

unusually substantial body of

musical knowledge tempered

by an art-school approach, which

explains this album's curious

combination of progressive

rock bluster and glum-punk

attitude.

The result is a collection of

patchy extremes, ranging

from the brisk, Suede-like re-

frain of *Stay Young* to the apoc-

alyptic, white-noise finale of

the 21-minute title track, a se-

quence that makes even Spirit-

ualized at their most extreme

sound quite restrained. Some

fine-tuning is still required.

TOM PETTY AND

THE HEARTBREAKERS

Echo

(Warner Bros

9362-47294 £15.99)

NO LONGER the commercial

force he used to be, but still

very much in control of his

rock'n'roll faculties, Tom Petty

is a man for whom, musically

speaking, the 1990s never hap-

pened. *Echo* is a compendium

of elegantly crafted rootsy riffs

and hard-tuck lyrics which

could have been minted at any

time in the past 20 years.

Sung by Petty in his tough

but world-weary drawl, heart-

sore ballads like *One More**Night* and polite rockers suchas *I Don't Wanna Fight* will

prove reassuringly familiar to

rock fans of a traditional dispo-

sition. However, the lack of

anything remotely resembling

a contemporary hit single is

TOP TEN ALBUMS

- | | | |
|--------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 (+) | Equally Cursed and Blessed | Catania (Blanco Y Negro) |
| 2 (+) | Gold - Greatest Hits | Abba (Polydor) |
| 3 (+) | Talk on Corners | Corn (Atlantic) |
| 4 (2) | Forgiveness, not Forgotten | Corn (Atlantic) |
| 5 (5) | Performance and Cocktails | Stereophonics (V2) |
| 6 (7) | I've Been Expecting You | Robbie Williams (Chrysalis) |
| 7 (8) | Stop On | Steps (Epic) |
| 8 (3) | You've Come a Long Way, Baby | Fatboy Slim (Sire) |
| 9 (9) | Gran Turismo | Cardigans (Stockholm) |
| 10 (6) | Baby One More Time | Britney Spears (Jive) |

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● Figure in brackets indicates last week's position

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sore ballads like *One More**Night* and polite rockers suchas *I Don't Wanna Fight* will

prove reassuringly familiar to

rock fans of a traditional dispo-

sition. However, the lack of

anything remotely resembling

a contemporary hit single is

likely to limit the album's ap-

peal to those already converted.

THE CRANBERRIES

Bury the Hatchet

(Mercury 524 644 £15.99)

AS THE title suggests, *Bury*

the Hatchet finds the Cran-

berries opting for a softer, more

conciliatory approach than

that of their last album, the

hard-rocking, big issue-driven

To the Faithful Departed.

But a querulous undercur-

rent still remains in the man-

nered performances of Do-

lores O'Riordan as her voice

swoops around like a boat in a

high wind on a succession of

jingly-jangly songs with sec-

ond-hand titles such as *Promis-**es*, *Just My Imagination*, *Shat-**tered* and *Delilah*.

Musically, they sound more

like the Smiths than ever,

while lyrically the clichés pop

up like ducks on a shooting

range: "Isn't it strange how

people can change?" "The

world is your oyster now" and

so on. With or without the

hatchet, they are a band for

whom sympathy is in increas-

ingly short supply.

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LINKS

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Ultrasound: www.nuderecords.com

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Cranberries: www.cranberries.ie

TELEVISION:

Top of the Pops: BBC1, tonight,

7.30pm

RADIO:

UK Top 40: Radio 1, Sunday, 4pm

Reform of an adman

Rupert Howell is set to bury the bad image of adland, says Stefano Hatfield

It is 1984 and the new red Ferrari 308 GT is "gunned" up the drive leading to the Heinz building. As the Armant-suited 27-year-old adman swaggers out an elderly security guard asks: "Sir, is that your car?"

"Yes," is the proud response. "Then, sir, could you kindly stick to our speed limit in future," says the guard, reducing the adman to embarrassed foot-shuffling in front of Heinz's marketing men.

Rupert Howell, who this week became president of the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA), tells this story against himself with a wince. He understands why admen came to be frowned upon by clients and public alike, because then he was the model of odious adman.

Now, as IPA president, he is the man charged with guarding the image of the image-makers for the next two years. Howell, 42, must complete the process of leading the industry back to the position of trust and respect lost during the 1980s' excesses and the recession of the early 1990s.

His appointment is not without irony. In 1987 he founded Howell Henry Chaldecott Lury (now HHCL & Partners), arguably the most controversial agency of the past decade. HHCL has won plaudits and opprobrium in almost equal measure for its work for First Direct, Fuji, Pepsi, Mercury, Maxwell, the AA, Egg and Tango, among many others.

HHCL questioned everything from methods of audience measurement to the over-reliance on volume-discounted media buying. It argued against the distinction

between advertising and direct marketing and attacked the industry's predilection for big-budget films. Cynics said HHCL was all hype, seeking to get commercials made on the cheap, and that politically correct campaigns for the likes of Fuji were publicity stunts.

Howell, charged with developing the agency's business and promoting the talents of his partners, Axel Chaldecott and Steve Henry, and the strategic abilities of Adam Lury, took much of the flak. Oddly, he is criticised for his manipulation of the media and his obsession with the agency's image. He works hard at it, but he puts the secret of good press relations down to "returning phone calls".

And it is for this reason that quality among others that the IPA has skipped a generation and turned to him. Howell laid out a seven-point plan in his inaugural address at the Savoy on Tuesday. Issues ranged from the separation of media buying from creative agencies and the digital/e-commerce future, to the ad industry's regulatory bodies and the quality of agency and client recruits.

It was a bravura performance: if he does half the things he mentioned and continues with his day job, it will be some feat. "Ad agencies matter," he tells me. "We research the nation every day. We are the bellwether of the economy. I believe we'll never have a better chance to establish that fact."

He points to research that shows UK advertising has a 75 per cent public approval rating, record high. In America, it is 50 per cent. This, he says, is not just about the poor quality of the ads



Rupert Howell: "Ad agencies matter. We research the nation. We are the bellwether of the economy"

there, but an argument for keeping their own toy ad ban across Europe. Howell sees this as the only real threat from politicians. The Government has mollified its pre-election interventionist stance. There appears no immediate threat to the current system of self-regulation, although Howell accepts that the plethora of bodies is confusing and cumbersome. He advocates a single regulatory body for broadcast standards.

But Howell—the former public schoolboy who lives in Chiswick and is a staunch Tory—praises the Government's positive attitude towards the industry. He's just as optimistic about the industry's status in the City and among clients. "The majority of businesses and clients do think advertising

is a vital part of their armoury. In the end clients come to us for the bit they can't do: the creative bit." Howell believes that business needs to be reminded of advertising's effectiveness, but that it does not need convincing that it works. He understands the value of creating and sustaining a unique brand. He's done it for clients and his own business. Now he must do it for 12,750 IPA members.

"The 1980s were about work hard/play hard, but the image was just play hard," he says. "As an industry, we lacked subtlety and decorum. The recession was the corrective surgery — we are now a much better business."

Stefano Hatfield is Editor of Campaign.

The war cries of dissenting voices

John Pilger and Phillip Knightley, two of Britain's most experienced international journalists, are among the signatories to a letter to *Press Gazette* this week criticising the British press for "largely" backing the bombing of Yugoslavia. Apart from a "few" voices, they say, newspapers have failed to challenge the rhetoric of the military and political elite.

They are wrong. There hasn't been a war involving Britain in the past 50 years in which so many sceptical or dissenting voices have been raised in British newspapers or in which editors have published so many articles dissenting from their own position, whether Korea, Suez, the Falklands or the Gulf.

With two of its star columnists, Simon Jenkins and Matthew Parris, disagreeing with the policy of the paper's leading articles, *The Times* is only one example of the open debate that editors are allowing. Jenkins wrote this week that Milosevic was a nasty job of work but he was not Hitler or Stalin: "He does not merit a Third World War."

The most belligerent supporter of Tony Blair is *The Sun*. Yet Richard Littlejohn was given a full page last week to write his view that the free world had been led into an "unwinnable war" by a priapic draft dodger and a former supporter of CND (a criticism also made by Boris Johnson in *The Daily Telegraph*).

Other newspapers have been equally open to debate. This week there have been three articles in *The Express* questioning Nato's intervention. Stephen Glover in the *Daily Mail* and Andrew Roberts in the *Evening Standard* have agreed with Jenkins and Paul Routledge, who knows Yugoslavia, is acting as *The Mirror's* sceptic. Littlejohn noted another surprising feature of this war which is that *The Guardian* and *The Independent* are supporting the case for a ground war. Yet *The*

Guardian also demonstrates the splits on the Left with Hugo Young and Francis Wheen supporting the bombing but Richard Gott and Seamus Milne opposing it.

By their concentration on the plight of the Kosovo refugees, as Young noted in *The Guardian*, newspapers and television have imported humanitarian impulses into foreign policy. "Not even during the Second World War," the veteran W. F. Deedes wrote in *The Daily Telegraph*, "did I witness a scene of human anguish comparable to what I saw yesterday on the Kosovo-Macedonian border."

Such reports have moved readers as well as politicians. Among the sums raised to alleviate the refugees' plight have been nearly £1.7 million (*Daily Mail*) £152,000 (*The Mirror*) and £86,000 by *The Sun*. *The Express* readers have given 1,200 tons of clothes. More than 5,000 readers responded to an invitation to call *The Mirror's* general, Sir Roderick Cordy-Simpson. By a

tiny majority, they were against the war, according to Piers Morgan, its Editor, although their overwhelming view was that now that Nato is committed it has to win. One of their anxieties was whether Milosevic had the ability to target Britain.

One new morale-boosting weapon for British troops, who now have access to PCs, has come from *The Sun* which this week launched its own website (CurranSun.com) (which, to digress, may come to be seen as the most significant development yet in bringing the Net to the masses. Already hundreds of thousands are applying.) On *thebanat war.co.uk* it has a "Kosovo edition" of news about the conflict as well as the usual "treat" from Page Three.

There has been no great lift in newspaper sales, except for the first day of bombing when *The Times* rose by 36,000 and 23,000 by *The Guardian*.



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Seducin

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هكذا في الأصل



Battle joined: Bridget Rowe, left, shortlisted for the editorship of GH, and Elsa McAlonan, who is to take Woman's Journal into a new era

Seducing the over-40s

Never has the 40-year-old woman felt so desired and seduced — by magazine publishers at least. Gone are the days when the glossy monthlies for 20-year-olds had all the fun with orgasms and nail varnish, leaving their older peers with Navy-blazer fashion and HRT. Now the fortysomethings are the prizes sought by editors, advertisers and the men in suits.

Why? Because there are so many of them and because of who they have become. Only this week, the women of Rylstone and District WI in Yorkshire started as naked but decorous calendar girls, selling out immediately and sparking a sense that middle-aged women are not burnt-out irrelevances but a force to be reckoned with.

The battle for this market is illustrated by the changes about to take place in two of the most revered magazines aimed at this age group. *Woman's Journal*, an IPC title fighting a 13.9 per cent fall in circulation to 100,000, recently sacked Marcelline D'Argy Smith, its Editor, and is about to "refocus" the magazine under the editorship of Elsa McAlonan.

At the National Magazine Company, *Good Housekeeping*, the homemaker's bible, is looking for a new editor and has added Bridget Rowe, the formidable former newspaper editor, to its shortlist. *GH's* circulation, at 440,700, is also declining, and Pat Robert-Cairns, its current Editor, has chosen to take a part-time role for the company.

Both new editors face a difficult task, according to Joyce Hopkirk, whose own attempt to launch an intelligent, fortysomething magazine, *Chic*, ended in tears when it was bought by Northern and Shell's Richard Desmond.

Middle-aged women have become sought-after magazine prizes. Sally Morris reports

who promptly put it on ice. Hopkirk says: "It is a very fragmented market to crack. You can't just pigeonhole a 40-year-old woman these days."

"Some are almost grandparents, some are having their first babies, some are getting divorced or remarried, some are still single."

Who do you focus on? It is this very diversity that publishers see as a strength. Plus, of course, the demographic fact that this age group is growing. In a discussion document, Terry Mansfield, the managing director of National Magazine Company, outlines his belief in the potential of the age group. The figures are impressive: a 10 per cent increase in the number of women aged 40 over the next five years; and a 21 per cent increase over the past five years in women aged 40-plus who work full-time.

That means, in most cases, more disposable income — to the delight of advertisers. Mansfield sees *GH* as the catalyst to change the whole magazine market, and his written proposal sets out his vision. *GH* must use its pages to redefine what the home means to women today.

This is a crucial area for both magazines, whose traditional home role has been usurped in recent years by the explosion of interest in interior design and DIY. The popularity of glossies such as *House Beautiful* and the BBC's *Home and Antiques* proves

there is a readership greedy for more.

Money is another area where women expect more informed and intelligent editorial. They no longer want to read about housekeeping budgets, they want to know the latest on personal pensions and the best mortgage advice.

The other important area is fashion — one of the quickest ways a casual reader can decide if a maga-

zine's profile fits her. But it requires great creativity to redefine the pages when readers are conditioned to youth and beauty. *Elle* and *Vogue* have got younger in their approach, while magazines such as *Red* and *Frank*, which aim at intelligent 30-year-olds, are finding this a difficult audience to target and are also sliding down the age range.

Tina Gaudoin, the launch editor of *Frank* and now a freelance, believes the market needs to be created. "It's a bit like the rise of all these coffee shops. No one knew they wanted to buy expensive designer cups of coffee until the shops arrived. It's the same with the over-40s market. Women want to feel it's cool and sexy to be 40. But it needs to be done with wit and humour."

Whatever the demographic evidence, revamping trusted products such as *GH* and *Woman's Journal* involves a risk. IPC's response is to appoint an editor not scared of taking risks. Elsa McAlonan had a strong background in newspapers before she joined *Marie Claire* as deputy editor and then acting editor. Her skill at blending news awareness with magazine appeal delighted her IPC superiors, who leapt at the chance to put her in charge of *Journal*.

At National Magazines, the choice of editor is still undecided. If the job goes to Bridget Rowe, former Editor of the *Sunday Mirror* and *The People*, as well as *Woman's Own*, it will be controversial. Her brash style and mass-market background would seem at odds with the authoritative status of *GH*. As a former *Mirror* colleague put it: "GH readers want to know where to buy the best washing machine, not how to have sex on one."

Other rumoured contenders include Tessa Hilton, currently overseeing magazines at the *Daily Mail*, and Lindsay Nicholson, Editor of *Prima*, the bestselling women's monthly. On paper Nicholson would be the most obvious candidate, as *Prima's* mix of practical, fashion and strong health coverage marries well with the *GH* formula.

Whoever is appointed, both she and McAlonan risk losing existing readers as they throw out the old and bring in the new. Rita Lewis, publishing di-

Labour gets nasty in Scottish media war

Magnus Linklater on the blatant attempts to control press coverage of Scotland's election

The Scottish election may be bogged down in a mid-campaign rut, but in the media war all guns are blazing. Despite a comfortable lead in the polls, Labour in Scotland is betraying distinct signs of paranoia about the press, while the Scottish National Party is convinced it is the victim of a newspaper conspiracy.

Advertising has been withdrawn, charges of malicious fabrication have been bandied about, and at least one paper has been leant on by Downing Street heavies — a process its editor describes as "painful". As one Scottish journalist says: "Fear and loathing are rife in the land — situation normal."

The main victim of Labour resentment has been *The Herald* in Glasgow. The Labour Party has decided to withhold about £100,000 of its advertising from the paper on the ground that it has taken too accommodating a line with the SNP. Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, is said to regard *The Herald* with thinly disguised contempt, as "an out-and-out nationalist paper".

This will come as news to former Tory ministers, who used to berate it for being uncritically pro-Labour. Now, however, it has gone "off-message". An early series of opinion polls showing the SNP forging ahead were said to have been "unhelpful", and when the nationalists launched their "penny for Scotland" tax campaign, *The Herald* was accused of taking too sympathetic a view.

Almost alone among British papers, it supported the SNP leader Alex Salmond's attack on the Nato bombing of Serbia. To use this, however, as evidence that *The Herald* is hopelessly biased says more about Labour nerves than it does about the paper. *The Herald* has been relatively even-handed, its main crime being that it carries the occasional pro-nationalist column and is not as harsh in its criticisms of the SNP as most of the Scottish press. "We're playing this election straight," says Harry Reid, its Editor. "We're open-minded about the SNP."

The chance of the paper actually coming out in support of the nationalists is remote. It would not, however, be surprising if its newly launched sister paper, the *Sunday Herald*, did. It has been showing some radical tendencies, and a leader last Sunday took a distinctly unfavourable view of the Government's handling of the crisis at Kvaerner Govan.

Lord Macdonald of Tradeston, the Scottish Industry Minister and former boss of the Scottish Media Group, which owns both the

papers, was said to have been incensed. Before the campaign began, Scotland's biggest-selling paper, the traditionally Labour-supporting *Daily Record*, was highly critical of the Government. It even attacked Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, who is usually accorded saint-like status, and last month devoted a two-page spread to Labour's attempts to control the media.

Now, however, it has fallen back into line, and has won the advertising lost to *The Herald*. The result has been to enrage the SNP. Last week the *Record* ran a story claiming that Salmond had fallen out with Mike Russell, the party's chief executive, over the Kosovo issue. Incensed, Russell said the story was a fabrication, and accused the *Record* of being nothing but a "Labour election leaflet". Martin Clarke, its Editor, concedes that the paper is backing Labour but gives a warning that if the party wins it can expect no favours.

The Scotsman has in the past attacked Labour's devolution plans and still finds it hard to endorse them wholeheartedly. But it is strongly hostile to the Nationalists, and is likely to come down in favour of the devolution parties.

So far no paper has come out to endorse the SNP, although the *News of the World* could be heading that way. Even *The Sun*, which backed the nationalist cause in 1992, has decided instead to give Tony Blair its support over Kosovo, leaving little room for an anti-Labour line in Scotland.

So far, Labour, for all its paranoia, has had the best of the campaign. The media have concluded that Salmond had a bad opening week, and that his party may be on the slide. But there are still three weeks to go.

Since this will be the first election in mainland Britain to use proportional representation, some newspapers may well sit on the fence on polling day, and use their leaders to advocate ways of using the vote to ensure that a wide balance of MPs is elected.

Labour has not won many friends during the campaign. Its organisation is secretive, suspicious and hostile to the smallest sign of criticism. The idea that it might win an overall majority does not arouse great enthusiasm among those who have had to deal with the party at first hand.

And it would certainly reduce national press coverage of Scotland. As one London executive says: "If Labour walks it, interest is bound to fade. The nationalists... are the only thing that makes this election worth covering."

Herald lost
ads worth
£100,000
as Labour
objected to
its stance

● The author is a former deputy editor of *Woman's Journal*



The rivals facing change

zine's profile fits her. But it requires great creativity to redefine the pages when readers are conditioned to youth and beauty. *Elle* and *Vogue* have got younger in their approach, while magazines such as *Red* and *Frank*, which aim at intelligent 30-year-olds, are finding this a difficult audience to target and are also sliding down the age range.

Tina Gaudoin, the launch editor of *Frank* and now a freelance, believes the market needs to be created. "It's a bit like the rise of all these coffee shops. No one knew they wanted to buy expensive designer cups of coffee until the shops arrived. It's the same with the over-40s market. Women want to feel it's cool and sexy to be 40. But it needs to be done with wit and humour."

Sam is still the rights stuff

SAM CHISHOLM and David Chance, former bosses of BSkyB, are remaining as television rights consultants to football's Premier League.

This is despite the outcry over their controversial percentage pay deal, potentially netting them tens of millions of pounds, which led to the stormy exit of the chief executive Peter Leaver and the chairman Sir John Quinlan last month.

In a vote at that time the club chairmen came out 19 to one against the payments. But, quietly, in a second vote a week later they apparently opted overwhelmingly (one insider says by 18 to 2) in favour of Chisholm and Chance being the rights advisers — if their price is right. Negotiations with a working party are advanced. Chisholm and Chance have a legal contract, and demonstrated during their reign at BSkyB that they play hardball. But with the Restrictive Practices Court case on the BSkyB/Premier League deal concluding in July, and pay-per-view football already



under way, their expertise is clearly irreplaceable. Premier League sources say: "Renegotiation is going well."

■ **SUNDAY BUSINESS**, the Barclay brothers' niche pink paper, is doing well with sales at 60,000, on target for the 80,000 goal. But there's a worrying lack of ads. Whether this is the lag between a new launch and advertisers pulling in, or whether it has been under-sold is debatable. But Saturday night TV ad-spots have been dropped.

Andrew Neil, editorial supremo, says the paper will have to rely on word of mouth. "Chief executives [the paper's target] are not watching ITV on Saturday nights. They are out to dinner."

■ **INTRIGUING** to see Anne Wood, of Ragdoll Productions, creator of the *Teletubbies* (and *Tots TV* and *Rosie & Jim*) joining *The Sunday Times* Rich List. At £55 million, she ties in 446th place. Her secret? "She's very shrewd," says a BBC executive. "She does her own development work, and comes to us late in the day, which means she retains ownership of the rights." That way riches lie.

■ **TECHNICAL** trials for the BBC's new *Six O'Clock News* with Welshman Huw Edwards started this week for the May 10 relaunch. Dry runs are essential as the show is so complicated: there are 31 regional opt-outs, for local headlines to be inserted. For example, after a new theme tune, Edwards will read several national headlines then up pop regional presenters with their stories. The same thing happens at 6.15pm. The potential for cock-ups is huge.

● maggiebrown.media@btinternet.com

THE SUNDAY TIMES

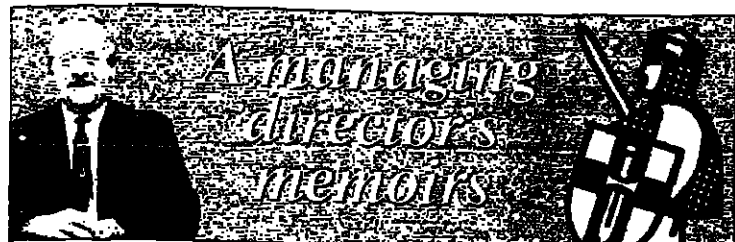
LAP OF LUXURY

How much is enough to leave you sitting pretty...?

The Sunday Times Magazine this weekend

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

Junor, the secretary and Selina



Andrew Cameron, managing director at Express Newspapers until 1996, recalls the day that John Junor was caught in flagrante in his office

Of the many editors I worked with at Express Newspapers, John Junor, Editor of the *Sunday Express* for 32 years, towered above them all. He was one of the few of whom it could truly be said that he was a legend in his own lifetime.

Knighted in 1980 for his services to newspapers (and Margaret Thatcher), this son of a Glasgow Calvinist steelworker held trenchant views that touched a chord with millions of readers.

He alone rode the rollercoaster of the Express group's changing fortunes. Virtually impregnable and well aware of his value to the paper, he survived and prospered as the group he worked for went through two traumatic changes of ownership. In 1977 the Beaverbrook family sold their birthright to Trafalgar House, and its managing director Victor Matthews took control. In 1985 David Stevens and United Newspapers bought control. In both cases, with very different men in charge, Junor managed to survive, showing the same obsequiousness and cunning that had served him so well with Beaverbrook.

When he died in 1997 he received the traditional memorial service in St Bride's Church in Fleet Street, the "parish church" of newspaper men and women. On such occasions little is said of the dead. But at times during Junor's service, the obsequious nature of the tributes was almost too much. Rarely had the J.J. catchphrase "Pass the sickbag, Alice" seemed more appropriate. The real Junor was a very different man from the one his readers might have thought they knew. Many people who did know what he was really like simply were not aware.

There were no half-measures with Junor. You either admired him or loathed him; and vice versa. What no one questioned was his professionalism, no matter how quirky, at times eccentric, his editing could be J.J.'s expenses used to come to me for approval. They were extensive and often largely anonymous. In the column where he was supposed to identify lunch guests, he would write "Contacts known to the Chair-

man", though this was as meaningless to the Chairman as to me. Every year, too, there was a golfing holiday in The Gambia, followed by flattering comments in his column on that country and its leader, a golfing companion. The costs were paid by the Express under an "Overseas Travel Allowance", which gave Junor the freedom to travel to where he chose as part of his untaxed remuneration package.

Yet when it came to signing staff expenses, Junor was famously tight-fisted. I recall him discussing with me the expenses of Bob McWilliams, then news editor. "Andrew," he said, "For years McWilliams's expenses have been averaging three pounds ten shillings a week. Lately they have risen to three pounds fifteen shillings. Do you think he's keeping a mistress?" I laughed, but the smile died when I realised that Junor was serious.

Junor had a notoriously short attention span. Ted Westropp, the amiable if long-winded City editor, once came to see J.J. with an tale that even J.J. found hard to interrupt. He idly picked up a pair of binoculars he had bought for his yacht and held them up to his eyes.

Westropp's flow began to falter. "Amazing," said Junor. "I can see the pigeons sitting on the roof of St Bride's Church."

He could also be high-handed. One day he called a new reporter named Perry into his office. "You have a wonderful opportunity here, Mr Perry. Play your cards right and I shall have your name up in lights. You can see it — 'Don Perry, *Sunday Express* Reporter'."

Perry's first name wasn't Don but Perry was too timid to correct him. So Perry's byline appeared in the *Sunday Express* as "Don Perry" for many years and as "Dom Perignon" in *Private Eye* spoofs.

J.J. took great care to befriend *Private Eye*. He and the Editor, Richard Ingrams, used to lunch regularly, swapping political and sexual gossip. This did not mean that Junor escaped Scott-free. Ingrams once parodied a piece in the J.J. column in which Junor had reminisced about a colleague from his RAF days whom he described as a "white-haired boy in a Nissen hut



John Junor, Editor of the Sunday Express for 32 years, was caught in flagrante in his office

near Deal". Variations on the piece appeared again and again in the *Eye*, describing a "white-haired boy in a Nissen hut near Deal" in the most inappropriate stories. Junor was mystified, never realising that his mystification was itself the joke.

Although his writings would lead you to believe that he was a model of propriety, J.J. had more than an eye for the women. At company functions, staff wives suffered his attentions. One who fell for his not-so-obvious charms was a young secretary. It happened in 1979, the year Junor celebrated his 60th birthday and his 25th year as Editor of the *Sunday Express*. The staff held a lunch in his honour, which was attended by Margaret Thatcher.

It was a good lunch and, like many good lunches, it went on and on. Junor stayed all afternoon and got completely picked. He was tumbling at the dresses of almost every woman in sight, inviting them to return home with him. The secretary, in her mid-twenties and in awe of the great man, accepted. They went first to the office in Fleet Street, where Junor poured. But they were interrupted in mid-trust by the sports editor, Les Vinter, who wanted to show Junor a page proof. They next headed to J.J.'s house in Dorking by train from Waterloo. But by the time they reached Clap-

ham Junction, Junor's bladder was bursting. Unable to contain himself, the man who regularly scoured both drunken yobboes and British Rail threw open the carriage door and peed on the track.

So began a six-week affair, with most of the action taking place on Friday nights in the *Sunday Express* flat in Clarges Street. The old rogue must have had unsuspected charms, for the girl fell desperately in love and believed he wanted to marry her. She was devastated when Junor broke off the relationship.

Perhaps by then Junor had his eye on a bigger catch — the glamorous Selina Scott. One day in spring 1980 he arrived in the office in such an uncharacteristically good mood that staff were curious. Over lunch with colleagues he explained that he had spent the previous evening with Selina. Later that day, the foreign editor, Peter Vane, caught him penning a letter which said "Selina Darling..."

When Selina came as his guest to the Boat Show lunch it was clear to those present that J.J. saw himself and Selina as an "item". I do not think there was anything in it, or

only in his dreams; not least because of Junor's own description of her as "100 per cent her own woman and utterly incorruptible".

Although he was a great editor, John Junor was flawed as a journalist. He shied away from major hard news stories, preferring the role of behind-the-scenes wheeler-dealer.

Junor himself told the story of how, in the early 1980s, he was tipped off that Maurice Oldfield, the former head of M16 called out of retirement by Margaret Thatcher to head security in Northern Ireland, was a promiscuous homosexual. The source, a very senior police officer, indicated to Junor that the hall porter in the block of flats where Oldfield lived would "sing like a bird" if asked about the heavy traffic in young male visi-

tors to the Oldfield flat. "The policeman feared that no one would pluck up the courage to tell the Prime Minister that her chosen man was a security risk. Would Junor help? Of course he would. Junor immediately set up lunch with Margaret Thatcher's personal private secretary and enlisted her help in getting a letter to the Iron Lady. A



Richard Ingrams, enjoyed gossip lunches with Junor



Selina Scott, the object of Junor's unrequited passion

He threw open the train door and peed on the track

few weeks later it was quietly announced that Oldfield would not be completing his tour of duty, and no doubt Junor congratulated himself on a job well done. At no time, it appears, did he consider what would have been second nature to most journalists: to print an exclusive that would have had the rest of Fleet Street chasing round in circles.

Whatever was happening, J.J. always knew best. In 1981 the then general manager informed him that Associated Newspapers was going ahead with the launch of *The Mail on Sunday*. Junor was scornful: "You have been listening to too much tittle-tattle in El Vino's. Let me tell you this — there will never be a *Mail on Sunday* — Never!"

Today, *The Mail on Sunday* is selling well over two million while the *Sunday Express* struggles to hold one million. And, of course, Junor spent his last years writing his J.J. column for *The Mail on Sunday*.

NEXT WEEK
The expenses fiddlers and how I brought them to heel

Code to halt theft of ideas

BROADCASTERS have signed a code to prevent theft of ideas, says Broadcast. Commissioning editors must log and acknowledge proposals on receipt. Senior executives — including the BBC's Alan Yentob and David Liddiment for ITV — will police complaints from independent producers that ideas have been copied.

REGIONAL newspapers are launching a £3 million campaign to attract advertisers. Campaign reports that the first ads, stressing that one in four adults reads a regional paper, will run in trade magazines and regionals next week.

THE telemarketing industry grew by 29 per cent last year, with turnover rising to £510 mil-



lion. Marketing's annual league table shows that the two top companies are SSL, a subsidiary of the Post Office, and BT CIB, owned by BT.

CHANGING FACES: Adam Higginbotham resigns as editor of *The Face* (Press Gazette). Carol Reay quits as deputy chairman of Grey Advertising (Campaign). Bob Geldof helps to form new radio and TV production company, 10 Alps. Rod Natkiel steps down as head of BBC network production in Birmingham (Broadcast).

GETTING the business: Abbot Mead Vickers BBDO to handle a £12 million campaign to allay fears of millennium bug chaos (Marketing). Environment Agency appoints Circus for £2 million flood-awareness campaign; Zenith Media wins £8 million media buying account for Littlewoods; Bozell Worldwide to handle £450 million international media business for Daimler Chrysler (Campaign).

MICHAEL LEAPMAN

Fifa caught offside by fans

FIFA, world football's governing body, this week took the surprise decision to appoint London's HHCL & Partners to develop global brand advertising and make its name synonymous with football.

The news comes hot on the heels of stories about the International Olympic Committee seeking an agency to run a \$100 million global advertising campaign. These initiatives show how far apart sport's governing bodies have grown from the people who ultimately pay their wages — the fans.

The FIFA decision was made by ISL, the Zurich-based sports marketing organisation which is FIFA's marketing partner. The brief is to highlight what FIFA stands for and explain its involvement with football beyond the World Cup.

Inherent in the assignment

is a tacit admission that, fairly or not, FIFA has been damaged by publicity surrounding incidents such as the World Cup ticketing fiasco and investigations into the way the former President, Joao Havelange, ran the organisation. There is widespread concern among fans that the interests of sponsors and advertisers are being given precedence over the views of the paying spectator.

Although FIFA has not suffered anything like the degree of negative publicity endured by the IOC, it is a tough challenge for HHCL. Football fans need to have hate figures on which to vent the frustration that comes with a lack of success.

It is difficult to see how phase one of the appointment — to create a new image for FIFA explaining its role — will be able to counteract any potential new negative publicity. As HHCL will on one hand be working with the likes of Coca-Cola, MasterCard and McDonald's to develop sponsorship opportunities, and on the other developing specific initiatives to encourage children to become interested in football, conflicts are likely to emerge. Nothing harms FIFA's cause more than the image of rich



Fifa needs a fresh image after the World Cup tickets fiasco

old men with far expense accounts lecturing from platforms, purporting to know what's best for the average fan. Radical surgery to FIFA's make-up would achieve more than advertising.

LABOUR is about to unveil the most radical shake-up to hit party political broadcasts in years. Its two-and-a-half-minute slots on April 26 will

consist of a series of five individual 30-second commercials running consecutively.

The early ads for the mid-term local elections each concentrate on different aspects of party policy including health, education and transport. All the commercials include the end-line: "New Labour, making Britain better."

IT was confirmed this week that Paul Simons, the TBWA London group chairman, is to be the new chairman of Ogilvy & Mather London. The appointment comes not a day too soon for the beleaguered O & M. Last year it lost Guinness and lead agency status on Ford, and saw the departure of BUPA. The bad news keeps coming: The Woolwich ended its 70-year association with the agency this week by switching to Publicis. Simons will have his work cut out to stem the flow, and a shake-up of senior personnel looks necessary.

Stefano Hatfield is the Editor of Campaign.

ITV's share of advertising revenue is falling year on year, according to the Independent Television Commission's review of commercial television revenue. Total net TV ad revenue was £2.8 billion in 1998, an increase of 39 per cent since 1994.

Although ITV still has the biggest share of the advertising market, cornering 63 per cent last year worth £1.8 billion, its share has dropped from 76 per cent in 1994. Channel 4 draws 19 per cent, and its portion has remained fair-

ly stable in the past five years. It is the growth of cable and satellite and the arrival of Channel 5 in March 1997 that have pulled adspend from

ITV. Cable and satellite's share of TV revenue has grown from 6 per cent in 1994 to 13 per cent in 1998, by which time Channel 5 had a 5 per

NET ADVERTISING REVENUE SHARE (%)					
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
ITV	76	74	71	67	63
Channel 4	18	19	20	19	19
S4C	0	0	0	0	0
Cable & Satellite	6	6	8	11	13
Channel 5	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	5

Source: Independent Television Commission

cent slice, worth £128 million. ITV's share fell most dramatically between 1996 and 1998, which is the period when both cable and satellite and Channel 5 gained most of their ground.

ITV's decrease in ad revenue share looks set to continue. The further growth of multichannel TV, precipitated by the emergence of digital television, points to an increase in revenue for the pay-TV channel providers.

Channel 5's growing viewing share, which was 4.7 per

cent in February, is also likely to drive its share of revenue up in the coming years.

Subscription income, sponsorship and the sale of goods are included in the ITC's calculation of total revenue. Last year 84 per cent of BSkyB's turnover was from subscription income and just 14 per cent from advertising.

MediaTel's online media information and analysis service is accessed via the Internet at <http://www.mediatel.co.uk> (0171-397 7575)

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CHANGING TIMES

POSTS

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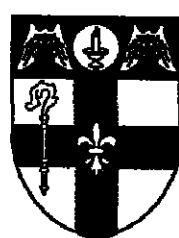
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STUDY LANGUAGES IN EUROPE
Language courses abroad for business or pleasure. 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 30, 36, 42, 48, 54, 60, 66, 72, 78, 84, 90, 96, 102, 108, 114, 120, 126, 132, 138, 144, 150, 156, 162, 168, 174, 180, 186, 192, 198, 204, 210, 216, 222, 228, 234, 240, 246, 252, 258, 264, 270, 276, 282, 288, 294, 300, 306, 312, 318, 324, 330, 336, 342, 348, 354, 360, 366, 372, 378, 384, 390, 396, 402, 408, 414, 420, 426, 432, 438, 444, 450, 456, 462, 468, 474, 480, 486, 492, 498, 504, 510, 516, 522, 528, 534, 540, 546, 552, 558, 564, 570, 576, 582, 588, 594, 600, 606, 612, 618, 624, 630, 636, 642, 648, 654, 660, 666, 672, 678, 684, 690, 696, 702, 708, 714, 720, 726, 732, 738, 744, 750, 756, 762, 768, 774, 780, 786, 792, 798, 804, 810, 816, 822, 828, 834, 840, 846, 852, 858, 864, 870, 876, 882, 888, 894, 900, 906, 912, 918, 924, 930, 936, 942, 948, 954, 960, 966, 972, 978, 984, 990, 996, 1002, 1008, 1014, 1020, 1026, 1032, 1038, 1044, 1050, 1056, 1062, 1068, 1074, 1080, 1086, 1092, 1098, 1104, 1110, 1116, 1122, 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EDUCATION

Why Celts have their own ideas about schooling



THOSE who have been arguing that the Government's penchant for control will make a nonsense of devolution have not been looking at the education agendas pursued in different parts of Britain. Education, education, education may be Tony Blair's top priority, but it can mean quite different things north of Hadrian's Wall or west of Offa's Dyke. Labour's promises for the Scottish and Welsh Assembly elections underline the differences. Unlike those in England, all Scottish schools are

being promised Internet access, four computers per class, and a laptop for every teacher. By 2002 three-year-olds are guaranteed nursery education and older children an after-school study place. Even the provision of classroom assistants will be more generous. The party's manifesto for Wales also promises millions more pounds for nurseries and schools. It sets different targets from those in England and holds out the hope of a different system of post-16 education.

English educationists have long looked enviously at the system north of the border, if not in Wales. The Scots have always seemed to value education more highly than the English, staying on at school and going through to university in larger numbers. The sixth-form curriculum offers a broader education without the influence of A levels and, even if they are paid no better, teachers still enjoy something of the status that they have lost in England. When Sir Ron Dearing was

looking for a model for a more flexible system of higher education, it was the Scottish mix of courses and institutions which attracted him most. Wales, too, has been ploughing its own furrow, although state education there mirrors England's more closely. As in Scotland, for example, there are no primary school league tables, no selection and very few grant-maintained schools. There are important differences from the English model in the literacy and numeracy strategies introduced in primary

schools. At times, it is tempting to see the Principality as a laboratory for wider government policy. The Welsh version of the classroom assistant scheme, for example, was strikingly different from that of England, offering places to unemployed teenagers as well as to older, trained helpers. The message will hardly be lost on David Blunkett if the scheme is a success. In reality, however, the differences may be more to do with the fact that local authorities in Scotland and Wales

wield more influence than their counterparts do in England. It is possible that devolution will alter this balance of power and that there could be more central control of education from Edinburgh and Cardiff than there has been from Whitehall. If so, the politicians will have to overcome some long-held beliefs. The Scots and the Welsh managed to resist some of the key Tory reforms and they will take some persuading to adopt the whole of England's test and examination-

orientated agenda. When the controversy over national primary school tests was at its height, for example, a pressure group called the Parents' Coalition polled thousands of Scottish families. The overwhelming response was that not only did they oppose the publication of school results, but they did not even wish to know their own children's scores, if the tests went ahead. Times have changed since then, but the Celts still have their own ideas about what they want from education.



Gail Bristow studies the *Primary Planner*: "What I want are clear ideas of what my daughter, Marnie, will be taught in her first few years and how I can reinforce that teaching at home"

Explaining school to parents

GOVERNMENT research suggests that nine out of ten parents want to become more involved in their children's education but do not know where to start. In an attempt to "demystify the education process", the launch of a series of aids for parents is launched this week. The *Pre-School Planner*, *Primary Planner* and *Secondary Planner* are full-colour, A3-size files with advice on everything from dealing with the first day at playgroup to standing up to teachers. Compiled by educational experts, they give detailed information on what children will be taught in the national curriculum and what they will be expected to know as they progress through school. Pre-school learning has three core elements — a 64-page parents' handbook, a learning book and 12 "creative play cards". The handbook covers key developmental stages: a three-year-old may be helped to draw a simple map showing his or her house and the seaside for example, with cars, trees and buses. This type of exercise, says the planner, could introduce times, distances and even a basic "understanding of the world".

What should the average child know at the age of 3, 10 or 16? Virginia Matthews looks at a series of new educational aids that tell parents what will be expected from their children

So what do parents make of it? Paula Young, 35, is a former nurse from East Sussex, whose three-year-old daughter Tabitha has started at a private nursery in the village of Cross-in-Hand. She says that despite having "an entire bookcase on everything from toilet-training to pre-school piano playing", she found the *Pre-School Planner* fascinating. "Most books about toddlers concentrate on head lice or bowel control. While the planner sometimes lapses into governmentese with phrases like 'desirable learning outcomes', at least the authors are talking to me about Tabitha's intellectual development. I also like the way the planner gives advice on talking to small children and helping them to make sense of the world around them. I don't always know how to pitch my conversation to her and the guide has helped me to think more about what I say to her and how."

But Ms Young reserves her highest praise for the section on personal and social development. "The planner talks dispassionately about the fact that human beings can be moody and encourages parents to be open with their children about what causes bad moods. The approach is a lot more thoughtful and realistic than some of the top-selling but dreadfully goopy parent and toddler books on my shelf." For primary and secondary school children, the planners offer step-by-step and subject-by-subject guides to the national curriculum. Unusually, the curriculum cards include foundation subjects such as art, music, history and geography, as well as core subjects. In primary and secondary planners, practical advice is given on using computers and the Internet to help children with their homework. Gail Bristow, a picture researcher

whose daughter, Marnie, 5, attends the William Patten School in Hackney, East London, found the advice on the curriculum worthwhile, "although the information about choosing schools and bullying was repetitive and even patronising. But the planner has given me clear ideas about what she will be taught in her first few years at school and how I can reinforce that teaching at home." A typical extract comes in the IT section at Key Stage 2: "Your child will be expected to become competent with the keyboard, typing with more than two fingers, cutting, copying and pasting..." However, parents may find much of the content in the secondary planner substantial. Gill Hemburrow, an editorial secretary whose son, Alexander, 16, attends a Roman Catholic boys' school in Bexleyheath, found only two topics to interest her. "By the time your child reach-

es this stage, you are inundated with advice on the curriculum, drugs and careers. The only new information was finding out more about the different bands your child can be put in at GCSE, and not to worry when your son likes to revise listening to music. There were also good pointers on how to revise." Would parents buy the planners? "I think that the secondary planner is aimed at parents who have made no attempt to understand how secondary schools operate," says Mrs Hemburrow. "They will be unlikely to shell out £14.99 for an entire book on the subject." But while Ms Bristow says she wouldn't pay £14.99 for the "peripheral stuff" on parents' evenings or PTAs, which is available elsewhere, she believes that a more comprehensive curriculum guide would be hard to find. Which raises the issue of why something so important isn't issued free to parents, just as books on baby care are issued automatically in the maternity ward. ● The *Pre-School*, *Primary* and *Secondary Planners*, published by The Stationery Office at £14.99 each, are available from bookshops.

Helping children to recognise abuse

Workshops are teaching self-preservation. Danny Lee reports

CHILD abuse is never easy to discuss. Most adults avoid the issue and find explanations difficult. But nine girls and seven boys in the sunny classroom of a Devon village primary school are having no difficulty in coming up with thoughtful descriptions of what an assault would mean to them.

"Assault is kind of like rape," says a ten-year-old girl. Then classmates chip in with other suggestions — it is anything you don't want to do; being bullied; when your feelings are hurt when other people gang up on you.

The children are taking part in an anti-abuse workshop at the socially mixed Blackawton Primary School. Jenny Kinder, their head teacher, watches as they explain with impressive clarity their feelings about the risks they face.

"Where do you feel safe?" asks Clare Miller, the lead facilitator with the Devon Child Assault Prevention (CAP) project, who is running the workshop. "With someone I trust," says a boy. "With my Mum," answers a girl, shyly.

Ms Miller, who has been running the workshops for four years, is part of a team of seven conducting a programme in schools in the South. The workshops aim to build children's confidence and to help them to find their own ways of understanding and protecting themselves from abuse. They discover tactics that vary from saying no and yelling to kicking and hitting.

"In this way," says Ms Miller, "assaults will be discouraged from thinking of the children as their passive victims."

Central to the workshops are plays dealing with bullying, approaches from strangers and sexual advances from people known to the children. After a short play showing an uncle trying to get his niece to give him a sexual kiss with an offer of Rollerblades, the children are asked how they would feel if they were her. "Annoyed. Uncomfortable. Embarrassed. Pushed into it," are the immediate answers.

"And what if the uncle asks her to keep it secret? Must something we like be kept secret?" asks Ms Miller, provoking a resounding, "No."

"Is this a safe secret?" — "No." — "What is a safe secret?" — "A birthday present." — "Who can we tell?" — "Auntie. Parents. Teacher."

Each piece of simple theatre is performed once to introduce the subject, and again after the group has discussed it and been gently steered towards finding their own answers. These are then put into action in the second performance, which shows the child seeing off the would-be abuser.

"What if the person doing the bullying is younger than you and you feel stupid telling anyone?" asks one girl during the bullying section. "A person who is younger can still be scary, and it is never stupid to tell people," Sacha Roberts, the project co-ordinator, says.

CAP's methods have been welcomed positively by children, parents, teachers and healthcare professionals in the South West, and the project has just won a contract to try its scheme at eight Royal Navy pre-schools in Plymouth. There is also growing interest in copying it throughout the country and, as Elizabeth Gale, the Health Education Authority mental health project manager, points out: "The £35,000 it costs to keep all children in South Devon primary schools in a rolling CAP programme is the same as the cost of intervention in one or two cases of abuse."

Students catch writing bug from authors on the Net



Computers can put children in touch with authors

CHILDREN can now get in touch with their favourite authors at the touch of a button. The website Writers Online is also encouraging pupils to write — and some are having their poems and prose posted for thousands of people to see. Students get a kick from receiving a personal reply from writers such as Nina Bawden, and, say teachers who have introduced classes to the site, feel encouraged to write. Every month a new writer or group of writers introduce themselves on the site with autobiographical information, details of what they have writ-

A new website enables children to communicate with their favourite — and formerly remote — authors. Tim Rice explains

ten, influences, how they write and an extract from one of their works. They then suggest something for the children to write and ask them to e-mail it to them. Everyone receives a reply. With luck, the youngsters' work will appear on the site with a reply from the author. Or perhaps the author will e-mail the child directly. At Newland St John's Primary School in Hull, pupils discovered that Anne Fine, author

of *Madam Doubtfire*, the book that inspired the movie, *Goggle Eyes*, and other celebrated novels, was author of the month. She had chosen a passage from *Diary of a Killer Cat* and was subsequently bombarded with ideas from Hull about pets on the rampage. A number of their efforts are now on the site. They did not get a direct reply from "their" author, although other children did. At Portsmouth's Court Lane Jun-

ior School, Nina Bawden, of *Peppermint Pig* fame, was then author of the month. She sent back a stack of responses to the children's descriptions of bravery. Darren Nickerson, a year six teacher at the school, said that the children were impressed not only by having their own work read by someone they respected, but that having other children's work displayed on the site gave them ideas. By chance, David

Orme, a poet and October Writer Online, visited the school during Literacy Week and encouraged the children to e-mail him directly. The site has also proved useful in secondary schools, although finding time for it may not be easy. John Reeves, head of English at Blyth Ridley High School in Northumberland, set up personal e-mail "postboxes" for the children. Four out of five had their poems displayed on

the site. One of his girls even won a book of poems. This month's author is Trevor Millum, the short-story writer and poet who helped to set up Writers Online. He says that although the website project is part of the National Year of Reading, the aim is to continue it indefinitely, possibly under the aegis of the National Association for the Teaching of English — as long as a sponsor can be found. ● Writers Online can be found at www.yearofreading.org.uk/writers ● The e-mail address is writers@nats.org.uk

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CRICKET

Cool Lewis outfoxes tired Essex challenge

By Jack Bailey

CHELMSFORD (third day of four): Essex, with all second-innings wickets in hand, are 170 runs behind Leicestershire

CENTURIES from Paul Nixon and Chris Lewis, who featured in a partnership of 228 for the sixth Leicestershire wicket, put Essex firmly in their place on a windswept day at Chelmsford yesterday. Through these two, and James Whitaker, the running fox increased the distance between himself and his Essex pursuers after two days of this PPP Healthcare county championship match in which neither had established a clear advantage.

Apart from a spell when Mark Ilett and Ashley Cowan threatened with the second new ball, Nixon and Lewis were in full command. Nixon is the essence of the brisk, watchful, imperturbable sort of left-hander to bolster England's middle order while keeping wicket with the best of them. Lewis, everyone knows what a talented, if eccentric, all-rounder he can be — added more than a touch of steady determination in a batting display that revealed all the class of a man who sees the ball earlier than most and plays it late.

Nixon, not out overnight, batted for nearly 5hr 15min, having entered the fray with Leicestershire precariously placed at 86 for four. Even against an attack as lacking in depth as that of Essex, this was a rare achievement and it brought him the eleventh century of his career and the second in successive championship innings, the last having been against Surrey at the Oval seven months earlier.

It came as something of a shock to discover that Lewis's eighth championship century, posted in 4hr 20min, was his first since he scored one for

Nottinghamshire in 1994. Many trials and tribulations have beset him since, but to watch him bat yesterday was to see a man apparently at ease with himself and keen to make the most of his skills.

Lewis had time to spare against the Essex seamers, neat footwork to combat the spinners and showed the full face of the bat to the ball. He could not resist the odd touch of unnecessary flamboyance, but, for the most part, it was from worthy strokes that he punctured the field with 17 fours, to which were added a couple of sure, safe sixes.

The part played by Whitaker in the establishing of Leicestershire's first-innings lead should not be overlooked. He stayed firm both on Wednesday evening, when the outlook was grim, and yesterday. He showed both that age had not worn him down and that the knee injury that kept him out of action all last season is not inhibiting his strokeplay.

By the time he left, to a bat-pat catch at short leg, Leicestershire were on the road to recovery through Nixon. Any chance Essex had of turning the tide disappeared when Nixon, on 89, gave an unaccepted stumping chance and Lewis, on 85, smashed the ball back at Peter Such for a technical caught and bowled, which so damaged the off spinner's right hand that he retired for the rest of the day.

Irani used his captain's prerogative to polish off a side by now in search of quick runs before having a fling at Essex. But Ilett looked the best of the Essex attack, despite the impression that he was lacking a yard or two of pace.

Leicestershire's day it was, almost completed with a wicket, but Paul Prichard was dropped at second slip off the fifth ball of the only over possible before bad light took over.

Symonds leads Kent recovery

By Ivo Tennant

LORDS (third day of four): Middlesex, with nine second-innings wickets in hand, are three runs behind Kent

IT IS no small feat to hit the ball as hard on a soft pitch in England in mid-April as Andrew Symonds did yesterday. His innings of 69 was resonant of summer days in Australia or of his batting in the limited-overs game when he was last seen here, with Gloucestershire. His partnership of 105 with Robert Key was the centrepiece of Kent's innings of 286, which gave them a narrow lead over Middlesex.

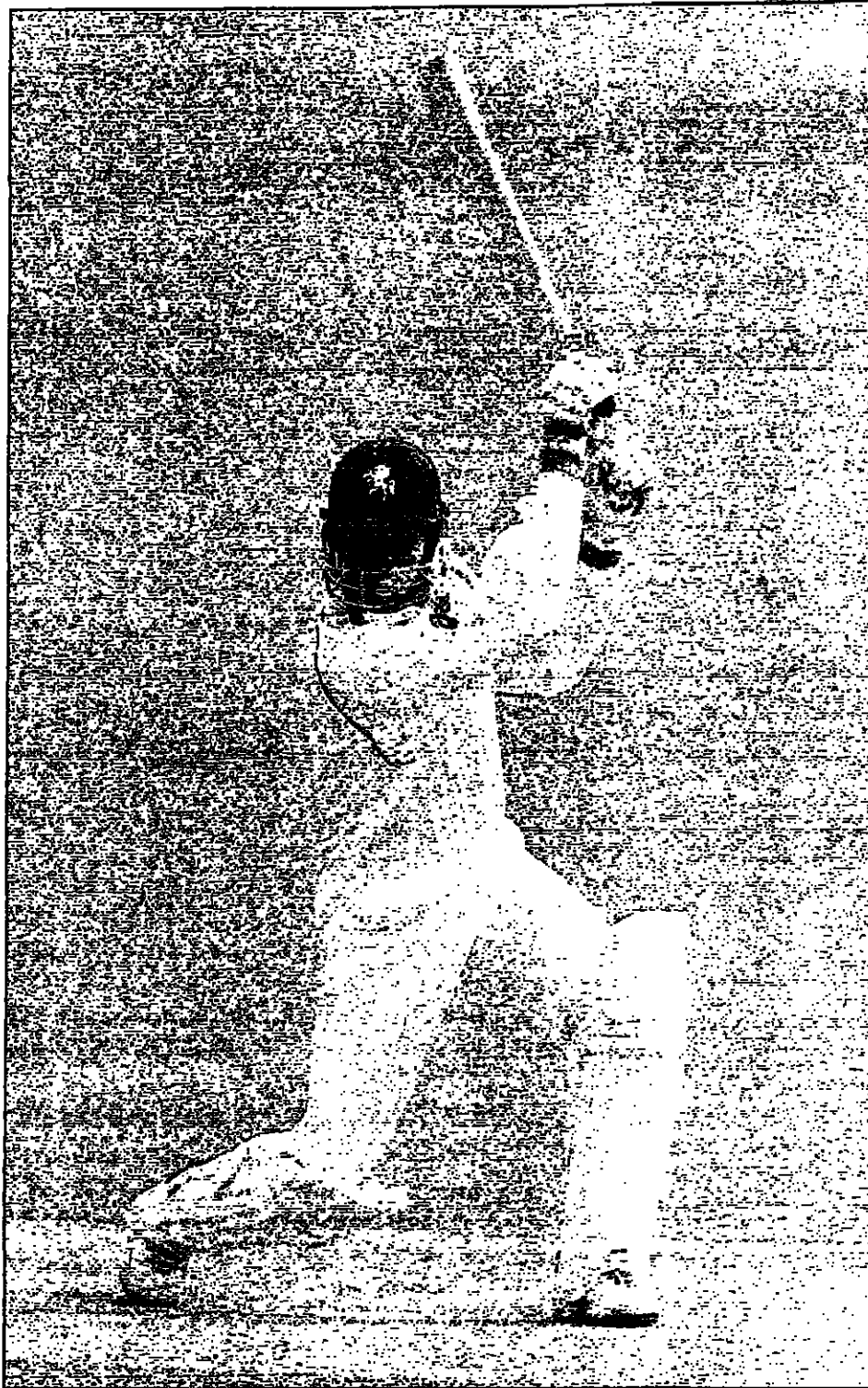
Key had a poor tour during the winter with England A, managing just 52 runs in five innings, but his ability is not in question, not in Kent, at any rate. He and Symonds came together when their side were 59 for three and, if not quite the antithesis of each other, they complemented one another in a long partnership.

When Key was taken at short leg off Tufnell, a tame dismissal after such a diligent innings, he had made 86, with nine fours. Symonds, by contrast, punched the ball away through a strength emanating from his powerful forearms and a knowledge of early-season English conditions gleaned from his two years with Gloucestershire.

Kent specifically wanted an overseas player who would not be absent during the World Cup. Once Symonds was not required by Australia, he became their man and, in a pre-season match against Essex, showed exactly what he is capable of when he struck 123 off 131 balls. He will pepper a few boundaries this season, for sure.

Symonds had made 69 off 89 balls with ten fours and a six when he drove a little too early at one outside off stump from Hewitt and was caught at backward point. Of the rest of Kent's batting, only Marsh proved effective. Diplomatically allowed to come in ahead of Fleming, his successor as captain, he struck six fours in a robust innings of 43.

As for the Middlesex attack, Hewitt finished with five wickets, including those of Ward and Wells in his first spell, and Walker with a shortish ball outside off stump that a taller man would have cut into the ground rather than straight to gully. Tufnell, who would be delighted to regain his England place in this, his benefit year, dismissed two of



Symonds plays an attacking stroke during his innings of 69 for Kent at Lord's yesterday

the main contributors in a steady spell. He will be all the fresher, he feels, after a winter away from the game.

So Kent gained a 32-run lead. In the 12 overs that Middlesex had in the evening, they lost Kettleborough, stumped by Marsh as he attempted to go down the pitch to Patel. Roseberry did not open the innings on account of having a badly bruised right thumb. To come up with a positive result from here will be quite an achievement.

SCOREBOARD FROM LORD'S

MIDDLESEX: First Innings 254 (D C Nash 82 not out, J Langer 55, J B Thompson 4 not out)	A P Wells c Nash b Hewitt 9
Second Innings	A Symonds c Ramprakash b Hewitt 43
R A Kettleborough st Marsh b Patel 14	M J Walker c Langer b Hewitt 43
J Langer not out 4	M V Fleming c Nash b Hewitt 18
J P Hewitt not out 4	D W Headley c Ramprakash b Cook 12
Extras (lb 1, nb 2) 3	M M Patel c Nash b Hewitt 18
Total (1 wk) 29	J B Thompson not out 0
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-24, 2-146, 3-146, 4-146, 5-146, 6-146, 7-146, 8-146, 9-146, 10-146, 11-146, 12-146	Extras (lb 4, nb 4, w 10, nb 4) 26
BOWLING: Headley 2-1-0-0, Thompson 6-3-0-0, Patel 4-1-1-1	Total 286
KENT: First Innings	FALL OF WICKETS: 1-10, 2-27, 3-58, 4-164, 5-170, 6-220, 7-255, 8-255, 9-255
R W T Key c Kettleborough b Tufnell 86	BOWLING: Cook 25-6-52-2, Johnson 18-5-52-0, Hewitt 25-11-50-5, Nash 11-5-26-1, Tufnell 26-8-45-2, Wells 11-5-26-1
T R Ward c Johnson b Hewitt 1	Bonus points: Middlesex 6 Kent 6
	Umpires: J H Harris and A Clarkson

Durham benefit as Morris hits out

By Michael Austin

CHESTER-LE-STREET (third day of four): Durham, with six first-innings wickets in hand, are one run ahead of Worcestershire

AS A benefit season launch, John Morris could scarcely have wished for more, except, perhaps, a hundred in the last summer of his six-year contract. Instead, he scored 55 from 82 balls, having made a brash statement by initially pulling Jason de la Pena for six.

With deep irony, Durham are controlling this game in a fashion with few precedents in their seven-year history, yet only one day remains because of bad weather. Their best hope is to bag another three batting points, a draw and 12 in all to begin the quest for top league status next summer, when the leading-nine cut-off is made.

Lewis, recovering from his troubled batting times last summer, joined Morris in making a half-century. The pair added 91 from 20 overs before Worcestershire opted for the more seasoned combination of Lampitt and Illingworth.

Belatedly, Lampitt was enlisted to deliver the 33rd over after Durham had raced to 130 for two, Lewis having gone leg-before to a full-length ball from de la Pena. Morris, bogged down by Illingworth's tormenting line, lurched forward and was stumped, leaving Boon and Collingwood to squeeze Durham ahead.

Almost symbolically, after Durham's past struggles, it became a grinding process, contrasting with the earlier freedom of Lewis, Morris and Daley, who struck five fours.

Morris enjoyed his joust with Liptrot, 19, a fast-medium bowler from Wigan making his county championship debut, and Daley, similarly, found de la Pena to his taste when play eventually began at 2.40pm.

At 35, Morris remains a batting enigma yet, with 47 first-class centuries, he is less than 400 runs short of 20,000 in his career. Flirtation with danger is part of his batting charm — hence his dismissal just as Durham could have anticipated a bigger lead, given better weather.

Butcher maintains Surrey's control

By Geoffrey Dean

THE OVAL (third day of four): Surrey, with five second-innings wickets in hand, are 285 runs ahead of Gloucestershire

SURREY served notice yesterday that their championship challenge is going to be as serious this year as it was last. To bowl Gloucestershire out for 213 on a pitch as good as this one was a commendable effort, even if some of the visitors got out to strokes best described as early-season ones.

Mark Butcher, by contrast, has looked like a player in the middle of a purple patch, rather than someone making his first appearance since the Sydney Test. His 98 not out off 139 balls was a sparkling adornment to another cold, grey afternoon. Sadly, hardly any spectators were present to witness such an accomplished innings.

Those hardy souls who did make it were also rewarded with a fine exhibition by Salisbury, whose return of five for 44 was instrumental in Gloucestershire's cheap dismissal. He spun several deliveries quite sharply, posed a continual threat with his googly, which was seldom picked, and conceded only five fours in 17 overs. The leg break with which he removed Windows was a peach.

At one point it seemed unlikely that Gloucestershire would save the follow-on, having slipped to 160 for eight which left them 33 short. But Harvey, forced down the order because of a sore back, thumped 30 in the space of 20 balls after taking 18 to get off the mark. He took 17 off one over from Ben Hollis, whose sore shins cannot have helped him. Bicknell was admirable, and Tudor fast but fractionally too wide of off stump.

Butcher, as he did in the first innings, scored the bulk of his 17 boundaries on the off side. As many as eight came off Lewis, who was wayward with the new ball. Wickets fell regularly around Butcher, but he watched these comings and goings with his customary stoicism, never failing to punish anything loose. Smith swung the ball to take four good wickets, but like the others, he never came close to removing Butcher.

Early claim to fame for Brow

James gives C batting tuto

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By Robert Sheehan, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

Begin Bridge with The Times: Lesson 52 - Opening Leads

Last week I gave some guidance about which suit to choose when you need to find an opening lead. You now have to decide which card to lead from that suit. This decision will sometimes be the same whether you are leading against a suit contract or no-trumps, but sometimes it will be a different card.

A lead from a suit headed by one honour (not the ace)
Against a suit contract or no-trumps, lead your fourth highest (see Lesson 17), the four, from the following holdings:

(A) K9743 (B) Q954 (C) J64

From (C), a three-card suit, you should choose your lowest card (against no-trumps you would not normally choose to lead from a three-card suit unless partner had bid it).

A lead from a suit headed by the ace
You would also lead fourth highest against a no-trump contract, but it is inadvisable to lead low from an ace against a suit contract — if declarer or dummy has a singleton you may never make your ace. Indeed, unless you have a strong reason for choosing this suit it may be better to choose another suit altogether.

A lead from a suit without an honour
Here, against both a suit contract and no-trumps, the common practice is to lead your second highest card. So, lead the seven from the following holdings:

9743 87532 975

On the next round you play your original fourth-highest (here the three) if you started with a four-card or longer suit. If you started with a three-card suit you play your highest card next. This is known as MUD (Middle Up Down).

If you started with a doubleton only, then you would lead your top card on the first round.

A lead from a suit with two or more honours
If you have three honours in a suit you should always lead one of them (against a suit or no-trumps): top of touching honours.

(D) KQJ65 (E) KQ1065 (F) KJ1065

From (D) and (E) lead the king. From (F) where the honour sequence is broken, lead the top of the touching honours, here the jack.

With two non-touching honours, always lead your fourth highest. With two touching honours against a suit contract, lead the higher honour, but against a no-trump contract lead your fourth highest.

It is important that you and your partner follow these guidelines because much of the subsequent defence will be based on the information given by the opening lead.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

NEODAMODE
a. A Spartan serf
b. A verse form
c. A medieval miniskirt

PARCENARY
a. A mercenary under contract
b. Inclined to pity
c. Joint heirship

PEAI
a. A type of peacock
b. A Lydian hieroglyph
c. A witch doctor

PIABA
a. A rope bridge
b. A sandal
c. An exotic minnow

Answers on page 50

KEENE on CHESS

By Raymond Keene, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

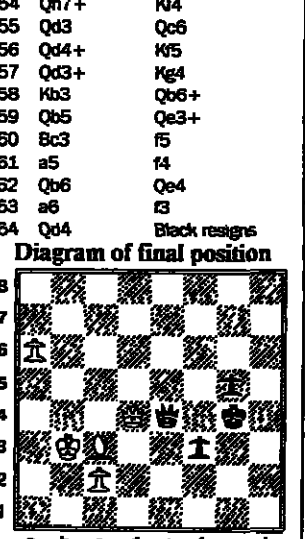
Karpov's complaint

Anatoly Karpov, the former world champion, once dominated the chess scene. Indeed, he is still the official (world chess federation) world champion. However, over the past few years he has been unable to replicate the form that brought him many tournament victories in the past. At Dos Hermanas Karpov is struggling, with just one win, one loss and the rest of his games drawn. Today I give his loss against Miguel Illescas, the Spanish grandmaster.

**White: Miguel Illescas
Black: Anatoly Karpov
Dos Hermanas 1999
Caro-Kann Defence**

1. e4 c5
2. d4 c6
3. Nd2 d5
4. Nc4 Bb5
5. Ng3 Bg5
6. h4 h6
7. Nf3 Nf6
8. Ne5 Bx7
9. Bx3 Bxd3
10. Qxd3 e6
11. Bc2 Nbd7
12. f4 Bb5
13. Qc3 O-O
14. Nc1 Qc7
15. Ne2 Rd8
16. Qc3 h5
17. g4 Bx5
18. f5 Nc4
19. Nf4 Nxd5
20. dxe5 Qxe5
21. Bc1 Qf5
22. Rxd8 Rxd8
23. Rd1 Rd1
24. Qd1 e5
25. Qd4+ e4
26. Nc3 Nc5
27. Nf4 Ne5
28. Qe7 b5
29. Qe7 Nf5
30. Qe7 c5
31. Ng2 f6
32. Ne3 Qe5

33. Qd7 Nc4
34. Qd5 Nf5
35. Ne5 Qd5
36. b4 h4
37. Qc5 Qf3
38. b5 h3
39. b6 e3
40. Qb4 h2
41. Qb4 Kg8
42. Qd2 e2
43. Qb4 Qc6
44. Qb4 e1Q
45. Qe1 Qb6+
46. Bc2 g5
47. Qc3 Nc7
48. a4 Kg6
49. Qb3 Qe1+
50. Kc2 Qc5
51. Qg3+ Nf5
52. Qf7+ Nf4
53. Qf2+ Kf4
54. Qf7+ Kf4
55. Qf3 Qc6
56. Qd4+ Kf5
57. Qd3+ Kg4
58. Kf3 Qb6+
59. Qb5 Qc3+
60. Bc3 f5
61. a5 f4
62. Qe6 Qe4
63. a6 f3
64. Qd4 Black resigns



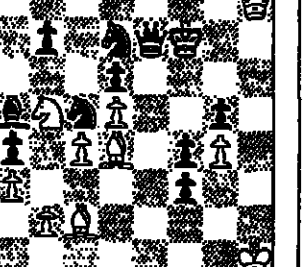
Keene online

You can send me your queries, puzzles, problems and games direct by e-mail. The address is keenechess@aol.com. The best contributions from Times readers will be published either here or in the Saturday Times Weekend column.

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

White to play. This position is from the game Seeman — Vein-gold, Tallinn 1999. Black may have thought that he had the white initiative under control here. If so White's next move would have come as a rude shock. What did he play?



Solution on page 50

EXCLUSIVE COMPETITION

THE TIMES

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ENTER FOR THE SAN MARINO GRAND PRIX TODAY

Printed below are the results of the Brazilian Grand Prix, the first of six races during the season offering up to 600 bonus points for correctly predicting the first three drivers past the finishing line. The leaderboard will be printed next Friday. C. Centre from Canterbury, earned 600 bonus points to win a pair of four-day passes to the 1999 British GP for scoring 1,489 points in the race. HOW TO ENTER Pick six drivers and six constructors, three from each of the four groups below, right. To qualify for the San Marino Grand Prix UK readers should call 0640 67 88 88 (+44 870 901 4206 ex UK).

RESULTS OF THE BRAZILIAN GRAND PRIX

Driver 22 Luca Badoer, was replaced by Stéphane Sarrazin for this race due to Badoer breaking his hand in a testing accident. Incident resulting in a driver being made to start from back of grid or pit lane: 06 Villeneuve; illegal fuel sample found after qualifying. **Qualifying** (qualifying points scored by qualifying for the start of each grand prix within the first 20 positions on the grid): Pole M. Häkkinen 30 points; 2nd D. Coulthard 25; 3rd R. Barrichello 24; 4th M. Schumacher 23; 5th G. Fisichella 22; 6th E. Irvine 21; 7th D. Hill 20; 8th H. Frenzen 19; 9th A. Wurz 18; 10th J. Herbert 17; 11th R. Schumacher 16; 12th O. Panis 15; 13th J. Trulli 14; 14th J. Aleksi 13; 15th P. Diniz 12; 16th A. Zanardi 11; 17th S. Sarrazin 10; 18th P. de la Rosa 9; 19th T. Takagi 8; 20th M. Gene 7. **Finishing points** (scored for the top 20 classified positions at the end of every grand prix): 1st M. Häkkinen 50 points; 2nd M. Schumacher 45; 3rd H. Frenzen 40; 4th R. Schumacher 30; 5th E. Irvine 29; 6th O. Panis 28; 7th A. Wurz 27; 8th T. Takagi 26; 9th M. Gene 25; 10th J. Villeneuve 24; 11th A. Zanardi 23; 12th R. Barrichello 22; 13th P. Diniz 21; 14th G. Fisichella 20; 15th S. Sarrazin 19; 16th J. Aleksi 18; 17th J. Herbert 17; 18th J. Trulli 16; 19th P. de la Rosa 15; 20th L. Badoer 14. **Fastest lap** (one point for each lap completed): M. Häkkinen 72; M. Schumacher 72; H. Frenzen 71; R. Schumacher 71; E. Irvine 71; O. Panis 71; A. Wurz 70; T. Takagi 69; M. Gene 68; P. de la Rosa 67; J. Villeneuve 66; A. Zanardi 65; R. Barrichello 64; P. Diniz 63; G. Fisichella 62; S. Sarrazin 61; J. Aleksi 60; D. Coulthard 59; J. Trulli 58; J. Herbert 57; D. Hill 56; Fastest lap time of grand prix: M. Häkkinen 1:10.01. **Penalty points** (incurred in a driver being made to start from back of grid or pit lane (10 points deducted): D. Coulthard -10 points; J. Villeneuve -10. **Did not finish** the race (10 points deducted): H. Frenzen -10 points; P. de la Rosa -10; J. Villeneuve -10; A. Zanardi -10; R. Barrichello -10; P. Diniz -10; G. Fisichella -10; S. Sarrazin -10; J. Aleksi -10; D. Coulthard -10; J. Trulli -10; J. Herbert -10; D. Hill -10. **Not starting** after qualifying (10 points deducted): none. **Speeding in the pit lane** (5 points deducted): none. **CONSTRUCTORS** (qualifying points scored for the first car only in the top 20 positions at the end of every grand prix): McLaren 30 points; Ferrari 25; Jordan 24; Williams 23; Prost 21; Benetton 20; Arrows 19; Minardi 18. **Penalty points** (incurred in a car being made to start from back of grid or pit lane (10 points deducted): McLaren -10 points; BAR -10. **Elimination of a car during the race** (10 points deducted): Jordan -20 points; Stewart -20; Sauber -20; BAR -10; Williams -10; Benetton -10; Minardi -10; McLaren -10; Prost -10. **Not starting** after qualifying (10 points deducted): none. **Speeding in the pit lane** (5 points deducted): none.

BONUS POINTS apply to six grands prix during the 1999 Formula One championship. The second is the Monaco GP. Correctly predicting winning drivers: 100 points; second place: 80 points; third place: 60 points.

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Cheltenham still on course for double joy

Non-League Football
By Walter Gammie

CHELTHENHAM week continues for Kingstonian when they travel to Whaddon Road for the FA Umbro Trophy semi-final second-leg match tomorrow, just four days after having made the journey for a Nationwide Conference match that Cheltenham won 1-0.

That victory, coupled with Rushden and Diamonds' 2-1 defeat by Yeovil, left Cheltenham needing to win home matches against Forest Green Rovers on Tuesday and Yeovil on Thursday to secure promotion to the Nationwide League.

Having drawn 2-2 at Kingsmeadow in the first leg of the Trophy semi-final, Cheltenham, the holders after beating Southport at Wembley last May, remain on course to follow Wealdstone (1985), Colchester United (1992) and Wycombe Wanderers (1993) as winners of the double.

At the foot of the Conference, Farnborough Town must beat Doncaster Rovers at Cherrywood Road tomorrow and hope Barrow lose at Stevenage Borough to avoid relegation. Even if Farnborough go down, Dean Coney, the caretaker-manager, would like the job on a full-time basis.

"I've had ten games during which I've had to play two youth-team players and three reserve-team players," he said. "But we've been hit by injuries and suspensions and at the time of the transfer deadline weren't in a position to sign anyone. If we get players in to strengthen the team, I see no reason why we shouldn't come straight back up."

Coney knows it is possible. Farnborough did just that after relegation in the 1989-90 season and then took two seasons when sent down again in 1992-93.

Leek Town go into their match at Yeovil tomorrow under the temporary stewardship of Tony Agana, after the dismissal of Ernie Moss in the wake of a 4-1 home defeat by Hayes last Saturday.

Leek made a tentative approach to John Rudge, through Linden Davies, the former chairman and a personal friend, but Rudge was advised not to involve himself with another club while his dispute over his dismissal by Port Vale remains unresolved.

THE GREATEST?



The euphoria may take a few days to die down, but how will history judge Ryan Giggs's remarkable solo effort at Villa Park on Wednesday? Matt Dickinson assesses its claims to greatness

One sweet moment of genius

One always suspected that it would take a genius, penalty or the loss of a coin to separate Arsenal and Manchester United on Wednesday night and, fortunately, it fell to the genius. What was left as Ryan Giggs limped away from the scene of his brilliance was to decide whether his goal was the best of the season, decade, or, in the case of those United supporters inebriated on success, the century.

If context is everything in sport, as Alex Ferguson claimed, then he was entitled to elevate Giggs's goal among the greats. The closest comparison that the United manager could remember was John Barnes's slalom run for England against Brazil on the night an Englishman taught the beach boys how to dribble.

but that was during a friendly. This FA Cup semi-final replay had been turned into a two-hour pitch battle and Giggs's strike provided a final, riotous explosion.

"It's his balance," Ferguson once said, "that gives him a real chance of being truly great," and it was that uncatchable quality that enabled him to glide through the best defence in Europe.

"He can wrong-foot anybody just by movement. Just when you think a tackler is going to get to the ball, he seems to float or ride over the challenge," Ferguson added, and Arsenal will testify to his powers of levitation. It was a goal scored as much by his swaying hips and shoulders as his thunderous left foot.

Only supporters of Arsenal should have cursed his wizardry, because a flying Giggs has

become hard to find and the English game has been much the poorer for it. Some of his exuberance, the tricks and the inhibition appeared to have disappeared from his football. He had become functional rather than mesmerising.

The boy wonder appeared to have turned into a 25-year-old with care. "He has been trying to embrace all parts of the game," Ferguson said by way of explanation, before adding: "but you can never take away the genius."

Perhaps Arsenal could and should have stopped him. A little nudge, a clip of the ankle perhaps, or an unseen tug on his shirt and the Welshman would have tumbled to the turf. But Giggs had only been on the pitch for an hour, the Arsenal defence for almost two and they could not even get close enough to trip him.

Their despairing tackles betrayed a tiredness that was close to exhaustion.

Patrick Vieira, whose rare mistake had provided Giggs with the ball ten yards inside his own half, could not recover the lost ground as the winger raced off like a greyhound from the stalls.

As he hurtled towards the penalty area, Lee Dixon missed once and came back for a second go, but Giggs slipped between him and Martin Keown as if he was skipping through the daisies. Next came a thundering Tony Adams, but his lunge was too late. The ball was already rising irresistibly past a sinking David Seaman and the roof of the net bulged like a windsock in a gale.

It was a finish worthy of the most expansive celebrations and Giggs did not let us down.

Normally one of the more restrained figures, he tore off his shirt to reveal his willowy torso and whirled his jersey in the air like a lasso.

"In terms of coming in an important game, that goal stands alone," his manager said, perhaps acknowledging the debate that would inevitably follow.

So does it bear comparison? Ricardo Villa's twists and turns in the 1981 FA Cup Final for Tottenham Hotspur may have lacked the whirlwind effect of Giggs's pace, but it rounded off a touching tale of despair and glory.

An Englishman who can set aside his envy for just a moment will acknowledge that Diego Maradona's second goal for Argentina in the 1986 World Cup quarter-final

was at least as comparable in execution and stature to Giggs's. How about Michael Owen's rapier run through the heart of the Argentina defence last summer?

There are bludgeoning strikes (Ronny Radford) and curling free kicks (Roberto Carlos) that will be used in evidence against Giggs, as will justifiable claims that Seaman should have stood up, that the Arsenal defence missed tackles and that the United winger barely touched the ball in his 60-yard dash.

So perhaps the last word should be with the vanquished. "Giggs's goal was one of the best I have ever seen," Nigel Winterburn, the Arsenal left back, said, "but that does not make the defeat any easier to bear." He, at least, will not be waiting for the television replays.

GOALS THAT LIVE IN THE MEMORY

RYAN GIGGS's winning goal on Wednesday night has been rated by some as the greatest goal of all time. Here are ten other contenders:

Pele (Brazil v Sweden, World Cup final, June 1958)

Having almost missed tournament because of knee injury, 17-year-old Pele announces presence on world stage with first of his two goals in final. Corroding high ball in crowded penalty area, flicks ball over his head, swivels and volleys home.

Bobby Charlton (Manchester United v Tottenham Hotspur, Charity Shield, August 1967)

According to Kenneth Wolstenholme, "good enough to win the league, the cup, the Charity Shield, the World Cup and even the Grand National". Denis Law's body-swing in own half and Brian Kidd's run down left pave way for Charlton's goal from 25 yards.

Carlos Alberto (Brazil v Italy, World Cup final, June 1970)

Completing Brazil's 4-1 victory, Rivellino passes up left wing to Carlos Alberto, whose cross is sent further along edge of penalty area by Pele for onrushing Carlos Alberto to smash ball into far corner.

Ricardo Villa (Tottenham Hotspur v Manchester City, FA Cup Final replay, May 1981)

Scorer of spectacular long-range effort against Wolves in semi-final replay, Villa shows he can dribble, too, by getting goal that clinches 3-2 win. Sees Tommy Caton, Ray Fensom and Caton again before sliding shot under Joe Corrigan.

John Barnes (England v Brazil, friendly, June 1984)

Silly Brazilians given taste of own medicine by Barnes' 20. Picking up ball on left near halfway line, goes past five opponents before sliding ball home from close range.

Diego Maradona (Argentina v England, World Cup quarter-final, June 1986)

Maradona shows why he is probably greatest dribbler. Having earlier punched in Argentina's opening goal, puts away from the Peter Beardsley and Paul, on halfway line and evades challenges from the Terry Butcher and Fenwick, before beating Peter Shilton.

Marco Van Basten (Holland v USSR, European Championship final, June 1988)

Arnold Muhren sends diagonal, hanging cross from left to far side of penalty area and Van Basten, from a tight angle, smashes volley over Dessayev and into net.

George Weah (AC Milan v Verona, Serie A, September 1996)

Libertan goes it alone in scoring remarkable goal on opening day of season for Italian champions. Collecting ball in own penalty area, Weah runs imperiously to other end of pitch before finding net.

Michael Owen (England v Argentina, World Cup second round, June 1998)

Having earlier won penalty that gives England equaliser, Owen takes pass from David Beckham and sets off at high speed towards Argentina area. The 18-year-old sidesteps Roberto Ayala and fires ball to right of Carlos Roa.

David Ginola (Tottenham Hotspur v Manchester City, FA Cup quarter-final, March 1999)

Ginola completes risky run with only goal. Beginning ten yards inside Barnsley half, tries inside Nicky Eaden, his marker, sweeps past challenges from Chris Morgan and Arjan De Zeeuw, and places ball beyond Tony Bullock, the goalkeeper.

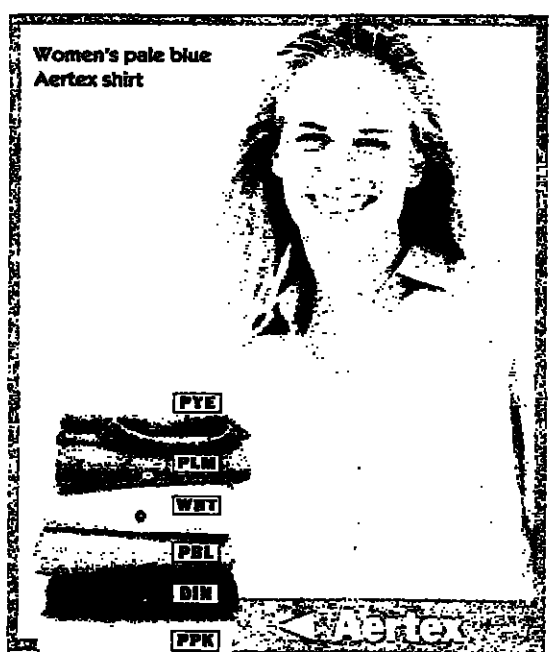
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CHANGING TIMES

Puzzle of Anelka must be solved

By Matt Dickinson

THEY conceded as many goals in two hours as they had in the previous two months, but it is not to Arsenal's stout defence that Arsène Wenger will look this morning as he reflects on his side's defeat by Manchester United in the FA Cup semi-final replay on Wednesday. The attack is likely to dominate his thoughts and, more particularly, the conundrum that is Nicolas Anelka.

If Arsenal are to retain the more important half of their Double — the FA Carling Premiership trophy — they need to rediscover some fluency when in range of goal, but the solution to that is enmeshed in the mysterious workings of Anelka's mind. The 20-year-old, despite occasional protestations of happiness, continues to look as though he has been dragged out of the dressing-room.

His two goals for France against England in February were supposed to have cast off his introspection, but he has since been dropped by his club and his two performances against United were riddled with inconsistencies. Brilliantly alert one minute, he would then drift off into his dream world for long spells.

There is increasing concern at Highbury as to exactly how long he will remain in England, which explained the club's interest in Robbie Fowler earlier this season, a transfer that the Liverpool striker appears to have

knocked on the head by signing a new five-year contract at Anfield. But Wenger has money to spend on other targets and Anelka, who would tempt £10 million from many of Europe's leading clubs, is hardly encouraging the idea that he will stay.

In the short term, Arsenal desperately need him at his brightest as they return to the league, starting with Wimbledon at home on Monday when Dennis Bergkamp may feel like relinquishing the penalty duties. The Dutchman scored his side's only goal against United with a deflected shot, but his penalty miss in the closing moments of normal time was his third failure in five spot kicks this season. He was the last to leave a morbid dressing-room at Villa Park and he will be desperate to make amends. Arsenal need Anelka to be equally enthused.

Chelsea limited by ambition

By Rob Hughes

ARE Chelsea, a squad built to surpass any in their history — and at a cost to match — going to blow the chance of winning the FA Carling Premiership through pragmatism?

They returned score, weary but unbeaten from Middlesbrough on Wednesday and the Chelsea coach, Ray Wilkins, suggested that the scoreless, guileless contest at the Riverside proved their manhood.

It is the oldest cliché in the book that a talented team first has to fight for the right to play. But Chelsea had the opportunity to rise above Manchester United and Arsenal, and to impose their skills on a lesser team such as Middlesbrough. They failed. The limit of their ambition seemed to be to hang on to one point.

Gianluca Vialli has built on Ruud Gullit's commitment to science and apparently intends recruiting yet more Italians to improve the technical and tactical

fluency of his team, notably on the left. But that is next season's work. Chelsea have first to believe in themselves and hold their nerve.

Vialli, for the moment, is neither offering himself to help win the league games, nor explaining why, although he has spoken on Italian television where he suggested the tide has turned Chelsea's way in the championship. This, despite Chelsea's struggle to score goals, is based on the stretching of nerve and sinew of United across three fronts and a combination of suspensions and age in Arsenal.

All the more reason why Chelsea should grasp the nettle. Their remaining six fixtures — four at home, starting with Leicester City on Sunday — are on paper easier than Arsenal's and United's, both of whom must travel to Middlesbrough and Leeds.

What would haunt Chelsea is to finish also-rans by a point or two — the points that they did not reach out for with any conviction on a chilly night on the Northeast coast. Gianfranco Zola, who missed their one gilt-edged scoring chance there, was the true face of Chelsea. Not because his shot was saved, not because his impish enthusiasm has dried up; but because very early in the game his desperation could be seen that Chelsea were playing a game foreign to him, foreign to their nature. Not even he can draw inspiration without the ball.

TITLE RUN-IN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Manchester United	31	18	10	3	69	32	64
Arsenal	32	17	12	3	43	13	63
Chelsea	32	17	12	3	47	24	63

MANCHESTER UNITED: Tomorrow: Sheffield Wednesday (h) April 25: Leeds (a). May 1: Aston Villa (h) May 5: Liverpool (a) May 9: Middlesbrough (a). May 12: Blackburn (a) May 16: Tottenham (h).

ARSENAL: April 19: Wimbledon (h). April 24: Middlesbrough (a) May 2: Derby (h). May 8: Tottenham (a) May 11: Leeds (a). May 16: Aston Villa (h).

CHELSEA: April 18: Leicester (h). April 25: Sheffield Wednesday (h). May 1: Everton (h) May 5: Leeds (h) May 10: Tottenham (a) May 16: Derby (h)

FOOTBALL IN BRIEF

anniversary of the Hillsborough disaster. Previously, second division clubs had received £1 million while third division clubs received £750,000.

Lawrie McMenemy, the Northern Ireland manager, has called up Damien Johnson, the Blackburn Rovers winger, and Adrian Coote, the Norwich City striker, for the international match against Canada on April 27.

Jonas Thern, the Sweden international, is to leave Rangers at the end of the season because of a severe knee injury. Thern, 32, who joined Rangers from AS Roma in 1997, is expected to retire from the game.

Dundee are planning to groundshare with Airdrie if construction work at their Dens Park home is not completed by July 31. It would mean Dundee supporters making a round trip of 160 miles to see their team in action.

Sunderland will play Sampdoria, the Italian Serie A club, in a testimonial match for Kevin Ball, the club captain and midfield player, at the Stadium of Light on July 31. Ball joined Sunderland from Portsmouth in 1990.

Almost 45,000 Millwall supporters have bought tickets for the Auto Windscreens Shield final against Wigan Athletic at Wembley on Sunday. Wigan have sold about 8,000 tickets for the match, which will have George Best as its guest of honour.

مكتبة الامم المتحدة

By JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT

100-391091-62, 63

A big hand for Doctor Dreamboat's exit

When a soap superstar quits a soap it is always a huge tabloid news story, somewhere between "Nude Vic Falls off Balcony" and "World War Three Declared". The publicity is more than enough to launch a solo singing career, for instance, or for Ross Kemp to fulfil his secret ambition to play the Hugh Grant parts in Merchant-Ivory adaptations of Jane Austen novels. That last bit was speculation by the way.

Endless explanations are proffered for their taking this bank-balance-jeopardising leap, most of them probably pure invention. My own theory, for what it's worth, is that after a while they start to feel psychologically with the characters they play, and it suddenly dawns on them that they can't stand the lifestyle.

Sharing a home with "lovable Cockney sparrer" Babs Winton would be trying enough without

the danger of being caught in the eye by a low-flying brasserie. But living with Mike Reid would, for a sensitive human being, be a form of slow torture. Anyone who doubts what an awful comic he was can occasionally catch snippets of his old acts on extra-terrestrial repeat channels. They say the will to live.

A New Year's Eve show from my childhood, when he sang *Roaming in the Gloaming* in a Cockney accent while Andy Stewart sang *Any Old Iron* in Scots, is seared on my memory as one of the most cringe-making moments in television history. The thought that he might suddenly revert and launch into a variety act is enough to drive anyone under the wheels of a singing contract. Tiffany and Grant just had to escape.

Which brings us to George Clooney leaving *ER* (Sky One). Forty million Americans watched *The Storm*, the heart-throb mat-

inee-dol's finale as Dr Doug Ross. The rest of the cast must wonder if they will become like Hank Marvin's outfit without Cliff Richard - Shadows of their former selves.

The episode provided a clue to the reason for Clooney's departure. The fact that Clooney can command multimillion-dollar contracts in Hollywood is a trifling irrelevance; he probably just couldn't stand the shouting. *ER* is normally frantic. Last night, apart from a few short interludes of deeply touching slush, the show was in overdrive with the gas pedal flat on the floor.

As in most American dramas, half the action is over before the title sequence has ended. The school-leavers were being out from the wreck of their bus; firemen rushed around with cutting equipment; a crane arrived while Dr Greene struggled to free a trapped boy.

REVIEW



Paul Hoggart

"We've got a pump!" he yelled. Aren't American doctors graphic? Then someone showed up with a severed hand, which he thought was still usable. Meanwhile, across the city, "Dr Dreamboat" was staggering around, dazed after his own private prank. But it's back at the hospital that things get truly manic. Everyone just shouts all the time. "B.P. 80 over 40!" - "Ruptured septum!" -

"Haemorrhoidal defibrillation!" - that sort of thing. Imagine if you had a hearing problem. What was that? Something to the "radius and the ulna"? "What's down to 88"? "Did you get an ovulsive split?"

What the heck is that? "Hey, we need a hand!" cried a paramedic, unloading another victim. That guy from the crash scene had a spare one, but nobody thought to tell them.

Even in moments of relative calm the barrage of urgent medical continues unabated. "CBCs normal - ALT is attenuated, especially - LFT" said Dr Benton through gritted teeth. Pardon? Specialty BLT? Is that on wheat toast, hold the mayo?

I don't want to spoil the story for Channel 4 viewers who must wait until next month for this treat. Suffice it to say that everyone proves to be very noble and self-sacrificing, that they all love each other to bits and it's all very mov-

ing in a Kleenex kind of way. And George Clooney finally escapes what the residents of the Queen Vic would refer to by its medical term: "CIBH of the ear-ole."

At least soap stars can walk away. Dispatches (Channel 4) unearthed a peculiarly nasty anomaly of the legal system whereby children can be forced to spend time with violent fathers who have beaten or otherwise abused their mothers. Some of the fathers have even attacked the children themselves before the separation.

Courts, apparently, take the view that fathers should be granted access to their children wherever possible. Individual judgments are influenced by the opinions of court welfare officers who have no specialised training in this area and may not even meet the children.

After an extensive survey by a pressure group called Amica

Dispatches interviewed mothers and children who had been physically assaulted, terrorised or simply neglected by abusive fathers during mandatory access visits. One poor woman's children had been murdered on an access visit to her mentally unstable husband.

Dispatches has become not so much a "one-issue" programme as a "one side of one issue" programme. This has its merits. If you put a case forcefully, it probably has more impact, at least in the short term, than a worthy balancing of opposing arguments.

But nobody spoke to defend the system; the only judge we heard from wanted reform; nobody put a case for the court welfare officers, let alone for any of the husbands. Some children are clearly being harmed even as we sit reading our papers, and the matter seems to require urgent government attention, but I couldn't help wondering if that was all there was to it.

- 6.00am Business Breakfast** (12790)
7.00am Breakfast News (16719)
9.00am News (16719)
9.45am Can't Cook, Won't Cook (1496055)
10.15am The Vanessa Show (16794090)
11.00am News (16719)
11.05am City Hospital (16934239)
11.55am News (16719)
12.00am Going for a Song (1673069)
12.25pm Wipeout (1673054)
12.50pm The Weather Show (16768571)
1.00pm One O'Clock News (168806)
1.30pm Regional News (16835516)
1.40pm Neighbours (16835516)
2.05pm Inside (16835516)
2.50pm The Keyhole (16737326)
3.25pm Children's BBC: Playdays (16737326)
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- 7.00am Children's BBC: Breakfast Show**
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